

THE PINK

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Cherries suffer home thrashing

Turn to page 5

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Lawrie Mac: Why I turned down Man U



Turn to pages 16-17

Thriving on season-end pressure



RONALD Koeman is relishing the pressure situation of the business end of the season as Saints look to make a final push for European football.

After the last international break of the campaign all eyes are now back on the Premier League with Saints aiming to achieve their goal of a swift return to Europe after this season's early exit.

At this stage only sixth place is enough to bag a spot, though there is still a chance it could go to seventh, depending on who wins the FA Cup.

That was how Saints made it in last year, but Koeman doesn't want to take the risk this time around.

He knows Saints need to continue the kind of form they showed before the break, when they defeated European rivals Stoke and Liverpool, if *Continued on page 3*



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SAINTS SPOTLIGHT



'We are difficult to beat'

Saints boss says Saints' hard work is paying off in battle for Europe spot

From front page

they are to catch the likes of Manchester United and West Ham.

But they start off with a tough game as they travel to table-topping Leicester on Sunday.

Koeman said: "We know our situation, we like to play in Europe then we need more points than sixth and that starts this Sunday."

"It's game by game and we play a lot but Leicester play a lot."

"Teams play for something and that's nice to see."

"Teams are fighting relegation, for Europe, for the title."

"It's pressure everywhere."

There is plenty on the line for both teams at the King Power Stadium, but the success of the Foxes this season has changed how people are viewing traditionally smaller clubs, including Saints.

"I think in general the teams out of the big teams they are stronger than normally," reflected Koeman.

"That kind of clubs can spend a lot of money to get good players in, and that makes the level more close to the big teams."

"Some big teams are really struggling the whole season, and that makes it different than normally – Chelsea, Man City, Man United, Arsenal."

"It's one team and maybe two teams very regular and they deserve to fight for the title – Tottenham and Leicester."

"The rest not."

"They did too many mistakes."

He added: "It's nice to see it's not all about money."

"If you create really a good team spirit, if you really have a good organisation in your team, and we showed that last year and again this season."

"We are difficult to beat and it's all the credits to Southampton."

"We had a little experience last season because we had a run in a high position on the table, but we didn't keep until the end of the season and that was the problem."

"Leicester is showing they will fight for the title until the last game of the season, and that's amazing and full of credits to Leicester."

Arguably the star of the Leicester show has been striker Jamie Vardy, who has gone from non-league football to England goalscorer and potential title winner in just a matter of years.

"It's a crazy story, and it gives everybody I think a good ambition," said Koeman.

"If you work hard, if you develop yourself then you can be a big player."

"Even if you start in different league or lower league, then there's always something possible."

"I think that's what Vardy showed everybody and that story is a crazy story."



Jamie Vardy and Jose Fonte battle for the ball during the teams' 2-2 draw earlier in the season.

Martina: I could have been breakdancer like my brother

CUCO Martina could have been a breakdancer but ended up becoming a Premier League footballer.

The Saints defender stopped short of following his older brother, Railyson, into the world of professional breakdancing and instead focused on the first thing his sibling inspired him to take up, *writes Peter Howard*.

As a youngster growing up in Rotterdam, Martina, who was born on the small Caribbean island of Curacao but moved to Holland at an early age, followed his brother's path by joining their local football club before he progressed to Feyenoord's academy.

And, while his brother eventually gave up football and became a dancer, the younger Martina sibling, who now captains Curacao at international level, went on to forge a career in football.

The 26-year-old played for RBC Roosendaal and RKC Waalwijk – where he was managed by Saints assistant boss Erwin Koeman – before moving to FC Twente and then, last summer, Saints for £1.5m.

"My big brother went to play soccer in Holland at a small amateur club and I wanted to do the same thing," said Martina, as he sat down at Saints' training ground ahead of the

trip to Premier League leaders Leicester.

"You always look up to your big brother and that's why I went to play football. Now he's a professional breakdancer, but he doesn't play soccer now."

With Graziano Pelle being a former ballroom dancing champion, Martina isn't the only Saints man with a talent outside of football.

"When I was young I went with my brother to the place where they trained and did breakdancing too," he added.

"I went there when I was 16 or 17 but I played football for Feyenoord, but I always went breakdancing."

The Curacaoan has had a slightly different international break to the rest of his Saints team-mates after captaining his tiny island side, which is managed by Barcelona legend Patrick Kluivert, in Caribbean Cup qualifiers in Barbados and at home against the Dominican Republic.

While the majority of Ronald Koeman's team have been playing in arenas in Europe, Africa and Asia, Martina has been enjoying a slightly different pace of life – but insists his trip to the Caribbean was no vacation.

"You get to see different things because Barbados – I've always

heard about it – but I'd never seen it in real life," he said, smiling.

"When I went there it was so beautiful – oh my god – it's so warm and the people are nice."

"It was great, but we came there to play soccer – it's no vacation."

Curacao lost 1-0 in Barbados, but kept their qualification hopes alive with a 2-1 victory over the Dominican Republic.

The surroundings in the Caribbean may have been beautiful, but Martina, who plays centre back for his home nation, admits the football isn't so pleasing on the eye.

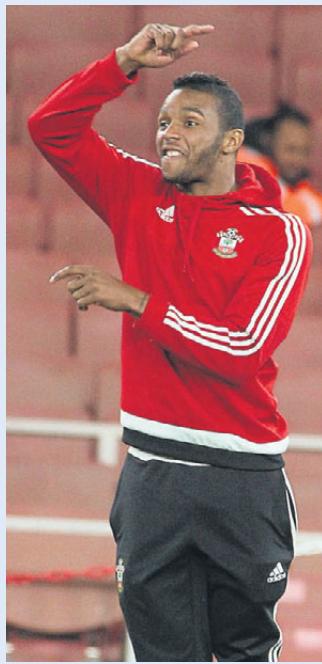
"They don't like to play football. It's more like fighting. They put the ball long and fight for the second ball," he said.

"They don't play from the back. It's more physical and they want to fight."

The versatile defender, who plays centre back for his country, wants to help his countrymen develop a more refined way of playing.

"I try to help my team to play from the back, but it's not so easy to play that because the team against us like to play long and fight," he said.

"The first half we always play from the back and the second half we'll put the ball long and play the same game [as the opposition]."



Cuco Martina opted against breakdancing as a career.



Pat O'Flaherty

New Cherries deal for ex-Stags loanee Pat

FORMER AFC Totton loanee goalkeeper Pat O'Flaherty has been rewarded for his progress with a new deal from parent club AFC Bournemouth.

O'Flaherty is currently on a youth loan with Totton's Southern One South & West rivals Wimborne Town - a year after spending time at the Testwood Stadium as a temporary replacement for Stags' No 1 Steve Mowthorpe.

He is one of four exciting, young prospects to have earned a new one-year deal with the Cherries.

The others are Ferndown-based defender Jordan Lee, left-back Callum Buckley - currently loaned out to Tom Widdington's Eastbourne Borough - and Lymington-raised frontman Joe Quigley who has had loan spells with Poole Town, Torquay, Wrexham and, currently, Woking.

"Since signing their first professional terms, these lads have shown a great willingness to improve," said Bournemouth's under-21 coach Stephen Purches.

"They are making the most of being in and around senior players at the club and during their loan spells which will help them progress."

● More non league on pages 6 & 10-15

Winchester City 0 North Leigh 0

Citizens grab a point in rare goalless draw

WINCHESTER City, the Southern One South & West's 91 goal top scorers were held to a rare 0-0 draw at the Denplan City Ground this afternoon.

Even with returning hero Andy Forbes making his home 'debut' alongside the League's top scorer Warren Bentley, the play-off chasing Citizens had to content themselves with a point, writes Wendy Gee.

City saw most of the early possession, but the first threat of note belonged to the visitors when George Seacole drilled the ball across goal and Jake Newton intercepted before Morgan Williams could capitalise at the back stick.

Winchester were still lacking their normal sparkle in the opening stages and their habit of squandering possession offered up a half-chance for Jamie Cook who shot wide on the turn.

Cook then capitalised on some messy defending but delayed shooting, allowing City to scramble the ball away.

The Citizens finally found some urgency on 22 minutes, carving the visitors open with a succession of quick passes, but top-gun Warren Bentley could not quite capitalise on Forbes' assist.

Bentley then cropped up on the left and, although there were no initial takers for his inviting ball into the box, Jamie Barron did well to turn his marker and fire a decent effort wide.

Cook then lifted a shot on the run over at the other end before, with 35 minutes gone, Winchester's Jamie Thoroughgood had a rather harsh free-kick awarded against him as Jon Else went to ground, but Williams' delivery was well defended at the far-post.

On 43 minutes Winchester looked like breaking the deadlock in an increasingly scrappy game.

Bentley this time darted towards the right byline and cut an inviting ball back for Micky Hubbard as he arrived in the area.

But just as the midfielder shaped to suit, defender Stuart Hale knocked him off his feet with a firm but fair block tackle.



Winchester keeper Brendan Norris made a pivotal save early in the second half.

Winchester had their young Canadian goalkeeper Brendan Norris to thank for preventing North Leigh scoring just over a minute into the second-half.

A quick break by the visitors took in the clear but Norris held his nerve, diving in front of the No 9 and blocking the ball with his body.

There was more positive goalkeeping from Norris, eight minutes later when he raced out of his area and won a header with Seacole after Cook had punted a high ball forward.

Norris's opposite number James Foster had dicey moments

on 57 minutes when he dropped Danny King's free-kick from wide left. Unfortunately for City the ball fell to a centre-back and Thoroughgood lashed it over.

After some neat link-up play between Taz Roberts and Bentley had come to nothing, City boss Paul Masters sent-on Craig Feeney in place of Forbes.

But it was North Leigh who had the next couple of chances with Norris keeping out Else's half-volley at his near post before Hole looked a free-kick over from 25 yards.

The game became increasingly stretched, Lance Williams had

a shot charged down in the Winchester area before Seacole capitalised on Newton's mistake and drove a shot beyond the far post.

The best chances were going the visitors' way, and Norris rescued Winchester with another good save with five minutes remaining, smartly turning away Seacole's goal-bound strike after sub Elliott Osborne-Ricketts had threaded the ball through.

There were shouts of handball against John Steadman from Winchester fans behind the North Leigh goal as the game tipped into stoppage time, but nothing was given.

Deja vu as Stags fail to learn their Marlow lesson

WITH both teams occupying a mid-table position, it's odds on that AFC Totton and Marlow will cross swords again next season in the Southern One South & West.

And when they do, Totton must make a mental note not to switch off in stoppage-time.

Terr once in time added on is human, but to do it twice in one season against the same opposition borders on careless, writes Wendy Gee.

The first time around it cost them two points at the Testwood Stadium in January when Adam Richards' late, late leveller pulled Marlow back to 2-2 after a Dylan Knight brace had seemingly clinched Totton the win.

Heavy price to pay

Last Saturday, at the Alfred Davis Memorial Ground, the Stags again succumbed at the death, this time paying the heavier price of a 2-1 defeat.

Mike Gosney fired Totton ahead on 49 minutes, sweetly picking out the bottom corner. But Phil John's free-kick, awarded against Pat Wilson for shirt-pulling, brought Marlow level nine minutes later.

That perked up the hosts who brought the best out of Stags' keeper Steve Mowthorpe before, with three minutes' added time played, Mowthorpe kept out Charlie Barton's shot low to his left but was helpless to prevent Jay Welch slotting in the rebound.

"They equalised in injury-time at our place and now they've got an injury-time winner against us today," sighed Stags boss Steve Hollick afterwards.

Scrappy game

"It was a scrappy game, but Marlow have got some very good players and we knew what we were going to get involved in."

"Gos put us ahead and we defended reasonably well until we gave away a needless free-kick for the equaliser, which knocked the stuffing out of us."

"Mowy (Mowthorpe) made a great save right at the end to keep out the first shot, but the ball bobbled out and the lad was on hand to bang it in."

With Jack Alexander injured and Nathaniel Sherborne and Nick Watts unavailable, Totton included three promising youngsters – forwards Jack Stattard and Matty Brewer and winger Sam Morris – in their squad.

All three got a run-out, shining a ray of light on an otherwise gloomy afternoon.

"We didn't really click up front," said Hollick.

"Mark Gamble is still feeling it a bit after a long time out injured for Wimborne. We always knew he was going to be more of a long-term signing while he is getting himself back to fitness."

New to this level'

"He's having to rest between games and we're trying to manage it as best we can."

"It's disappointing to have lost, but it's all experience for us. People tend to forget that I'm new to this level and so is (coach) Lee Burch and some of the players."

Totton's postponed Easter Monday game against Wimborne Town has been rescheduled for Tuesday, April 19 (7.45pm).

This Tuesday (April 5) the Stags head to Shortwood United.



Totton keeper Steve Mowthorpe

Cherries 0 Manchester City 4

Cherries dealt a thrashing as De Bruyne returns to City

RETURNING forward Kevin De Bruyne got Manchester City's Champions League push back on track as they thumped Bournemouth 4-0 at the Vitality Stadium.

Fit-again De Bruyne ran City's south coast show as Manuel Pellegrini's men secured their first Premier League win since March 5, keeping them in fourth place.

Fernando, De Bruyne and Sergio Aguero struck to put City 3-0 ahead and end the contest inside 20 minutes, before Aleksandar Kolarov blasted a fourth at the death.

The imperious De Bruyne's willingness to drive beyond Aguero transformed City's recently stilted play, creating vital extra space for both the lone striker and playmaker David Silva.

The 24-year-old Belgium star offered the pivotal contribution in his first outing since suffering a ligament injury in late January.

Pellegrini's side all-but slipped out of the title race with five defeats in 11 matches in all competitions since the February 1 announcement that Pep Guardiola would take over as manager next term.

De Bruyne's absence effectively ran alongside that sluggish run, and there was little coincidence around City's immediate improvement on his return.

City can ill afford to rest their Champions League qualification hopes on winning Europe's elite tournament, in which they face Paris St Germain in the quarter-finals.

So the importance of this resounding victory stretched far beyond purely boosting confidence – City will view their win as the catalyst to sewing up that fourth-place finish, especially with West Ham and Manchester United circling.

Bournemouth fired out of the blocks but that spark quickly fizzled out as five minutes of dominance quickly gave way to a quarter-hour blitz that settled the tie.

Fernando fired home his first goal of the season after Bournemouth failed to clear Jesus Navas' poor corner, as City took the lead after seven minutes.

The visitors quickly doubled their advantage with the best move of the match. Charlie Daniels surrendered possession cheaply, Aguero chipped in to Silva who laid off to De Bruyne, and the Belgium forward swept home on the volley.

After Aguero lofted it to Silva, the next time the ball touched the ground was when it hit the back of the net.

Cue the spring sunshine, cue the ex-



Manchester City's Sergio Aguero scores his side's third goal.



City goalkeeper Willy Caballero makes a save during Cherries' home defeat.

hibition football from City.

De Bruyne fired over from 20 yards when he could so easily have buried a second, but City wasted little time adding their third.

Navas' persistence paid off when he reached an over-hit pass to keep the ball in play and stand up a cross to the far post.

Aguero did the rest, out-muscling and out-jumping the Bournemouth

defence to loop a header back across goal and over the bamboozled Artur Boruc.

Fernandinho hit the bar from 20 yards with Boruc beaten again, before Bournemouth finally rallied.

Steve Cook's glancing header forced Willy Caballero into his first meaningful save of the day from Matt Ritchie's teasing cross as the hosts at least fought to make a fist of things.

City took their foot off the gas after the break, doubtless eyeing Wednesday's Champions League last-eight first leg in Paris.

Pellegrini withdrew De Bruyne before the hour, and Silva just after it.

Eunan O'Kane scuffed a shot badly wide when through for Bournemouth, and City wasted several half-chances, before Kolarov fired an unstoppable fourth for the final word.

Schlupp is doubt for Leicester

JEFF Schlupp is a doubt for Leicester's game against Saints with a knee problem.

The utility player suffered the injury on international duty with Ghana and could miss out when the Saints come to the King Power Stadium on Sunday.

Boss Claudio Ranieri has no other injury worries although Matty James is unlikely to feature as he continues his recovery from a serious knee injury that has kept him out for almost a year.

Ranieri also admitted N'Golo Kante could be allowed to leave the King Power Stadium.

Midfielder Kante hinted he was flattered about being linked with a move away after a stellar season.

He made his debut for France against Russia on Tuesday, scoring the opener in a 4-2 victory.

Ranieri has always conceded he will not keep unhappy players at the shock Barclays Premier League leaders and while he hopes to keep Kante he would not stand in his way if he wanted to leave.

"He is working very well. But if some big teams arrive who give us a lot of big money, maybe we can think about it," he said.

Meanwhile, the Foxes are close to agreeing new deals with Ranieri's assistants Craig Shakespeare and Steve Walsh, who is also head of recruitment.

The pair have been discussing fresh terms for a number of weeks and are set to commit their future to the club.

Ranieri added: "I think they are very close. I've spoken so many times of how they are important for us. If it wasn't important he [Shakespeare] doesn't stay with me. It is very important."

Leicester are five points clear at the top. Fans will get a doughnut and drink, with chairman Vichai Srivaddhanaprabha celebrating his birthday on Monday.

Ranieri added: "Yes, it's his birthday and he wants to offer some beer. It's fantastic."



Claudio Ranieri

goals

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Small-sided
Football Association

Eastleigh 1 Guiseley 1

Spitfires settle for draw as top-five rivals slip to defeats

EASTLEIGH couldn't capitalise on a dream start at home to National League relegation battlers Guiseley, with the Spitfires eventually forced to settle for a draw after an even contest.

That despite Chris Todd's side being given a real leg-up by Adam Lockwood's bizarre early own goal, writes Paul McNamara.

James Hurst's 55th minute free-kick earned the visitors a point, with Eastleigh never subsequently doing enough to threaten victory.

The brighter news of a frustrating afternoon for the Spitfires came from elsewhere, with top-five rivals Tranmere Rovers and Braintree both slumping to defeat.

Eastleigh's second minute breakthrough goal had more than an element of farce about it. Yemi Odubade hounded visiting centre-half Lockwood in pursuit of Luke Coulson's pass down the right. The under-pressure defender directed play back towards Steven Drench, only for the keeper to be undone by a bobble and completely miss his kick, with the ball limping into the left corner of goal.

The chastened visitors sought an instant riposte when Gavin Rothery crossed to the near-post, where Emile Sinclair arrived to prod wide.

As the early exchanges continued to be contested at breakneck speed, Lee Cook shot over from Odubade's cutback. With roles then reversed, Odubade just failed to tame Cook's glorious left-sided delivery.

At the other end Ross Flitney had a let-off when the Eastleigh number one dwelled in possession too long and was charged down by Sinclair, with the ball rebounding off the striker and wide of goal.

Jai Reason was soon stinging Drench's palms from distance after effortlessly shrugging off the attentions of Ben Parker.

And James Constable was furious on 26 minutes when, following smart work by Coulson, the Spitfires striker was denied a penalty after being clipped by Ryan Toulson in the box.

Ten minutes later and Josh Payne dragged wide to bring an incisive Spitfires' build-up to an anticlimactic end.

Drench then seized the chance to atone for his earlier blunder. Joe Partington kept play alive after Jamie Turley headed Coulson's free-kick back across the area, providing Constable with a shooting opportunity on the turn. The Guiseley stopper, however, plunged low to his right to pull off a magnificent one-handed save.

Reason headed into Drench's gloves on the stroke of half time, while Cook had a strike blocked in the area immediately after the break.

Cook was then felled by Rothery on the edge of the box as the winger attempted to dart onto a return pass from Odubade, with Payne sending



Eastleigh's Yemi Odubade on the ball.



Eastleigh's Andy Drury makes the tackle. Pictures: Chris Moorhouse

the resulting free-kick a yard too high to trouble Drench.

And the West Yorkshire team were soon level. Reason tripped Oliver Norburn after blocking the midfielder's initial drive at goal. Former West Brom player Hurst then drilled the consequent 25-yard free-kick low, unerringly, to Flitney's left, leaving the goalkeeper with no chance.

Flitney then rescued his side on 80

The Silverlake crowd was further flattened when the excellent Coulson was forced off by a reckless Lockwood challenge.

As Eastleigh sought to reassert themselves on the action Paul Reid was denied by Danny Lowe from meeting Cook deliveries twice in quick succession.

Flitney then rescued his side on 80

minutes as Guiseley streamed forward on the counter. Norburn found Sinclair, who powered away from Dan Harding before being thwarted by the smothering keeper's legs as he tried to round him.

Rather than setting up a grandstand finish, however, Flitney's intervention ultimately secured his side a share of the spoils.

RESULTS

Saturday, 02 April, 2016
VANARAMA NATIONAL LEAGUE SOUTH

Basingstoke 0 Concord Rangers 2
Bishops Stortford 3 Oxford City 0
Chelmsford 3 Bath City 1
Darford 2 Maidenhead 0
Hayes & Yeading 0 Ebbsfleet 5
Hemel Hempstead 1 Gosport Borough 0
St Albans 1 Maidstone 2
Sutton 2 Eastbourne Borough 1
Truro pp Whitehawk
Wealdstone 3 Havant & Waterlooville 2
Weston-s-Mare 1 Margate 0

EVO-STIK SOUTHERN LEAGUE Premier Division

Bedworth 3 Histon 2
Biggleswade 2 Kings Lynn 4
Cirencester 3 Bideford 4
Hungerford 1 Merthyr Town 0
Kettering 1 Hitchin 1
Paulton Rovers 0 Dorchester 1
Poole Town 3 Chesham 0
Redditch 0 Leamington 0
Slough 1 Chippenham 0
St Neots 1 Cambridge City 1
Stratford 0 Dunstable 0
Weymouth 2 Frome 0
Division One South & West
AFC Totton 0 Burnham 1
Bashley 2 Marlow 5
Bridgwater 1 Larkhall 1
Cinderford 4 Swindon Supermarine 1
Didcot 0 Banbury 1
Evesham 3 Mangotsfield 0
Slimbridge 1 Tiverton 1
Taunton 3 Bishops Cleeve 0
Wantage 0 Wimborne 0
Winchester City 0 North Leigh 0
Yate 0 Shortwood 3

SYDENHAMS WESSEX LEAGUE Premier Division

AFC Portchester 3 Verwood 1
Blackfield & Langley 0 Andover Town 0

Brockenhurst 4 Bournemouth Poppies 2
Cowes Sports 0 Salisbury 6
Fareham 1 Fawley 1

Folland Sports 0 Horndean 5

Lymington 1 Team Solent 2
Newport IoW 0 Moneyfield 3
Sholing 2 Hamworthy United 0

Whitchurch 1 Bemerton HH 3

Division One

AFC Stoneham 2 Romsey Town 0
Andover New Street 1 Alton 1
Christchurch 5 New Milton 0

East Cowes Vics 0 Amesbury 3

Fleet Spurs 4 Tedley Calleva 2

Hythe & Dibden 2 Totton & Eling 1

Portland 1 Pewsey Vale 0

US Portsmouth 2 Ringwood 1

PUMA ENGINEERING HAMPSHIRE PREMIER LEAGUE Premier Division

Baffins Milton Rovers 2

Otterbourne 1

Bush Hill 1 Hamble Club 1

Clanfield 1 Winchester Castle 0

Fleetlands 2 QK Southampton 1

Headley 0 Liss Athletic 2

Hedge End Rangers 2 Paulsgrove 2

Infinity pp Stockbridge

Liphook 1 Overton 1

Division One

Four Marks 2 AFC Petersfield 2

Netley Central 2 Broughton 2

Upham 4 Lyndhurst 0

Combination East

AFC Petersfield 1 Hayling United 2

Liss Athletic 1 Liphook 0

Combination West

Hamble Club 5 Bush Hill 3

Otterbourne 2 QK Southampton 0

WYVERN COMBINATION LEAGUE

John Stimpson Memorial Shield

Tadley Calleva 0 Moneyfield 8

Division 1

Aylesford 2 Lymington 3

Fawley 3 Verwood 0

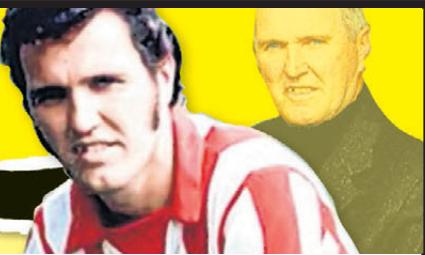
Totton & Eling 4 Hythe & Dibden 1

Paine's World

The Saints legend's

EXCLUSIVE

column on all things football



The rise of Ranieri's boys is no fairytale

WITH Leicester City approaching a history-making title, now seems to be the season for reflection. There are currently a rich stream of documentaries, opinion pieces, and online content dissecting the Foxes and what their success means.

The media love to define the narrative, but they can hardly be described as always accurate.

There is a theory out there that teams like Spurs are 'better' than Leicester. That Leicester is really a bunch of overachievers.

To refer to Leicester in this manner does a real disservice to the way their management and ownership has built their squad over the past three or four years.

Leicester entered this season with a quality squad that deserved mid-table expectations.

With the latest call ups, every member of their starting XI except Albrighton, Huth, and Simpson is a full international, and their count of 10 players away this break is on a par with other top teams. At least half their starting XI would start at the vast majority of PL sides.

Leicester's scouting and player acquisition team has worked shrewdly to make key signings. They have gotten some bargains, and the return is certainly on the high side, but their plan and execution has been solid.

Above all, Leicester City have that key mix of experience and youth that defines so many winning teams in all sports.

Since Leicester does not play in London, Manchester, or Liverpool, it's easy to think this.

Also, their recent long absence from the Premier League has somewhat obscured the club's long history, which has only seen them spend one season outside the top two tiers of English football.

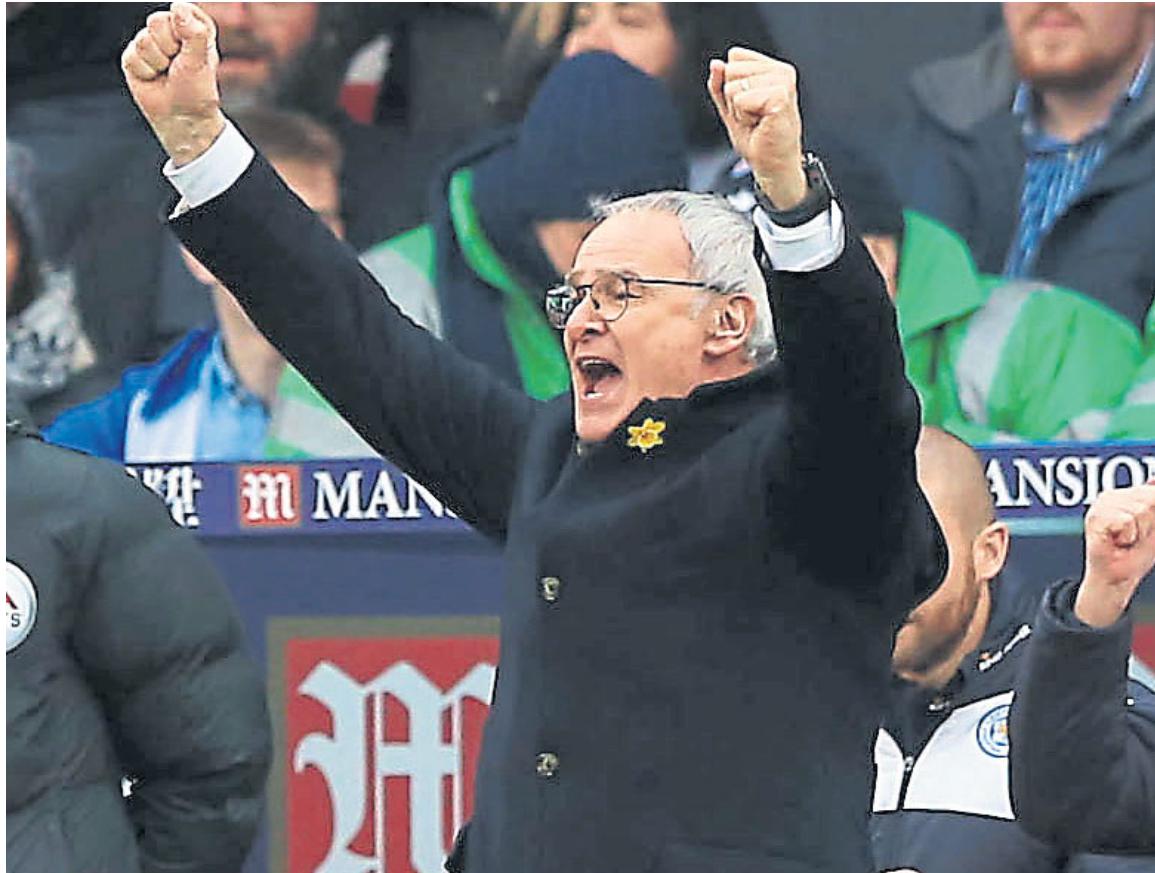
Leicester City is the 24th richest football team in the world, and the 11th richest in the Premier League. They play in the 20th largest stadium in the UK, before at least 32,000 fans every match.

Their youth system is in England's top-tier. Their facilities, sports science department, and recruiting are top-notch.

Their Thai owner said upon promotion last year he wanted to target a top-five finish in three years or so, and they are certainly ahead on that plan. With his net worth of 1.4 billion, he is the ninth richest Premier League owner, with no need to sell players to keep the team afloat.

The story of Cinderella has informed most of the narrative around Leicester City all year.

Everyone is waiting for the clock to strike midnight, for the King Power Stadium to turn into a pumpkin, for Jamie Vardy's boot



Leicester City manager Claudio Ranieri has led his side to the brink of the Premier League title

to turn back into an old slipper, and for the Foxes to hit the wall and go back to their hovel. Perhaps the reason this has not happened is because the label never fit in the first place.

If one never watched Leicester before this year, the narrative that the worst team in the Premier League suddenly became the best, over the course of a year would definitely seem to be the ultimate Cinderella story.

But, Leicester's campaign last season wasn't nearly as shambolic as, say, Aston Villa's this year or Cardiff's in 2013/14.

Before their great escape, Arsene Wenger actually said Leicester were the best team he had seen come to the Emirates.

A series of hard luck errors, bad bounces, and some unfortunate off-the-field distract-

tions took their toll, but Leicester never seemed to be a complete write-off, as attested to by their respectable -9 goal difference and eventual 14th place finish last year.

More than anything, Nigel Pearson hit upon their best formation and the team piled up their best run of results at the end.

Expectations for this year were tempered by pundits' loudly-voiced negative opinions of new manager Claudio Ranieri and questions about gaps in midfield, but Leicester's hometown media and fans were quietly confident about this year even before the remarkable season unfolded.

The story of Leicester is improbable, incredible, and inspiring, and truly one of the best sports stories in many years. It is so because of the teamwork, dedication, and great run of results the club are enjoying.

Certainly their rise to the brink of 'sporting immortality' as Gary Lineker puts it, was not anticipated.

The fact that a club with a purposely smaller wage and transfer bill can trump the riches of elite mega clubs inspires football's have-nots everywhere.

But, to emulate Leicester's success, one doesn't need to fall into an improbable fairy tale.

Instead, just look to the way their club is run, and to their adherence to a plan, and to the dedication and determination of their team and fans.

There you will find the true story of Leicester City Football Club.

Luckily, for clubs aspiring to better themselves, there are many things about Leicester City worth emulating.

Adam RantThe week's big talking points
with **ADAM LEITCH**

Blackwell's injury masks real issue

Biggest problems lie away from the professional level

NOBODY wants to see the kind of injuries sustained by Nick Blackwell happen in the name of sport, but we must move away from the inevitable knee jerk reactions that they bring.

Boxing is a tough sport, arguably the toughest of them all. Perhaps only the modern world of MMA rivals its place at the top of that particular chart.

Blackwell knew that all too well when he stepped into the ring to face Chris Eubank Jnr in a title fight.

He was prepared to deal with that, and though no boxer really ever thinks of the ultimate consequence – that they are putting their life on the line – it is an unspoken truth of the fight game.

It is starting to look a little more optimistic that Blackwell will pull through, and hopefully he does and can then find a new direction for his life without boxing.

But the first reaction being that boxing should be outlawed is just not the correct one.

Thankfully, these kind of incidents are relatively few and far between.

As when there is a bad crash in Formula One, it is only right that the safety procedures in place are examined again to ensure they offer the best possible protection.

In professional boxing they are pretty immaculate.

The amount of medical back-up, pre-fight checks and safety plans that have to be put in place are very thorough indeed. In fact, so thorough are they that the cost is proving prohibitive and part of the reason small hall shows are very rare.

Quite simply, the safety procedures are so good, the rules so strict, that they are actually inhibiting the sport in some ways.

However, most people would consider it is only right and proper that they are in place.

Though the Blackwell incident is clearly high-profile, as it came in a televised title fight, the bigger problems lie away from the professional game.

White collar boxing is the scourge of the small hall show.

In the pro game you have people getting paid, and as such there is real professionalism.

In white collar you effectively have keen amateurs fighting.



Nick Blackwell was placed in an induced coma after suffering bleeding to the brain following his defeat

It is not regulated and licensed in the same way, as it is not directly under the control of the British Boxing Board of Control.

As such the requirement for safety and medical provisions are far more lax.

Add to that the amateurishness of the fighters, and it is a serious acci-

dent just waiting to happen.

White collar has flourished while small hall shows have died because they don't have the prohibitive fees to pay, both in terms of purses for the boxers and the medical support, which has meant they can charge a fraction of the ticket price.

The boxing is often total rubbish,

but sadly some people want to see any old scrap, rather than a genuine sport.

Blackwell's injury is horrible and unfortunate, but the answer is not to ban professional boxing, but to look deeper at the problems in general before anything worse happens.

Matter of opinion

IT'S hard to fathom why Gary Neville's sacking as Valencia boss suddenly seems to mean he's no longer entitled to an opinion about football.

Neville was the top pundit on British TV before he decided to take the plunge into management in Spain.

It has really been an unmitigated disaster, but speculation that he might return to his previous role in the future has been met with utter scorn.

The logic seems to be that now he has failed as a manager he cannot possibly criticise other managers who get it wrong.

That really sums up everything that is wrong with football.

If Neville hadn't played professionally he would still be entitled to his opinion.

That he won a shed load of trophies in his career, is a coach with England and has managerial experience as well, and in a foreign country, makes him more qualified than ever.

It says a lot about the insecurities of others if they cannot understand that it is all opinions anyway, there is no right or wrong.



Gary Neville

Give Ryan a chance

IT seems as if Ryan Bertrand is facing a real battle to make the England squad for Euro 2016.

Roy Hodgson's assertion before the recent friendly matches that he wanted to take a look at Bertrand and Danny Rose, because he knew all about Leighton Baines and Kieran Gibbs, may have been fair, but also suggested the Saints man had it all to do.

That he ended up missing out through injury was not overly helpful to his cause.

However, anybody who has seen him play this season would surely conclude he has been the best English left back in the Premier League. For that to not be enough would be quite harsh.

SAINTS SPOTLIGHT



Saints' hollow gesture



SAINTS hit the headlines this week with the news that season ticket prices will remain as they are. Some are even dropping.

If the 7,000 fans get the sort of reductions the club are announcing, then it amounts to roughly just over £300,000. When you consider that the Sky deal next season dwarves anything seen in British football, it does make this £300,000 look somewhat paltry.

It's barely 0.5% of that Sky money.

It's hard. On one hand, you know the club is trying its best and you feel churlish about complaining that the price freeze/reduction isn't enough. You feel almost greedy, as if football fans are "complaining" about it.

But it's not just me is it?

When the club makes a reduction that barely touches half a million, and yet could stand to reap close to £100m a season, that gesture seems somewhat hollow.

What annoys me more than anything else is that Sky is now increasing its package price, with customers facing an increase of up to £70 a year.

So, football fans are facing a price freeze/minimal decrease in ticket prices which is in part funded by an increase in prices paid for by yet more ordinary people.

You can't shake the feeling that somewhere people are getting rich on the back of football... and it's the likes of you and me that are funding it.

If football in this country is to survive, clubs have to pass down a greater slice of the pie than what amounts to half a p cent.

When you consider the path that the fans of Southampton FC have taken to get where they are now, you can't help but think they deserve a bit more than a half a percent reduction on their ticket prices when the club is raking in close to £100m a year in television money.

Football fans are a ridiculously loyal



Were Saints fans happy with the club's 2016/17 season ticket pricing structure?

bunch, but there will come a time when the golden calf can't be milked anymore and football fans will start to desert clubs.

Eastleigh have announced another free game. They're a non league club, for God's sake, and they're giving away tickets. Southampton have a revenue of close to £100m on the horizon and they're reducing tickets by .5 per cent on 7,000 tickets.

It would seem the more money you have, the less likely you are to relinquish your hold on it.

Perhaps I'm being ungracious, and I've yet to hear of other top ten sides announcing price cuts in the anticipation of the new Sky money.

The club has made an effort and they should be applauded for that. They're heading in the right direction.

But football fans are running out of money. Their television packages are going up in cost and the ticket prices are still obscenely high.

The club needs to look at their pricing

policy and look to get tickets under £30 for a Premier League game.

That is the level that I gauge as being acceptable but, more importantly, affordable.

If the club gets it right they've set the foundations for generations of football fans and started to give the game back to the working man/woman.

Keep the prices as they are this country will continue to be a second rate sporting nation, watched those who can afford it - and not necessarily those who desperately need it.

- There was a time when an England game against Germany or the Netherlands would have had me heading to the pub in record time.

Yet the two recent games left me somewhat cold. Was it just me, or is the England team not quite the draw it used to be?

As a Saints fan, it's an easy answer.

England games were the biggest indicator as to which Saints players was next out the door.

You'd dread every game. If Clyne had a good game you knew he'd be gone. If Shaw got man of the match he'd be edging ever closer to that exit door.

International games were torture. On one hand you wanted to see the Saints boys to do well, but on the other you knew that with every good performance the team would suffer.

Bar Rodriguez and Forster, every Saints player that has played for England recently has left the club for so called greener pastures.

The win against Germany and the defeat against the Netherlands showed England for their faults and plus points. Capable of greatness one minute, capable of utter mediocrity the next.... Rather like watching Saints, I guess.

The win against Germany showed that there is most definitely life in England without Rooney. Yet you know that, come the Euros, Hodgson will revert to type and Rooney will start as England fail yet again.

It's obvious to me, it may be obvious to you, but you know it's not obvious to the England manager who will undoubtedly start him at the first opportunity.

It's such a shame and so utterly predictable.

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Non league FOOTBALL



Jamie Brown

Ex-Eastleigh star Jamie's on his way out of Town

FORMER Eastleigh and Gosport Borough favourite Jamie Brown is on his way out of Basingstoke Town.

The combative midfielder - a Stoke man since September 2014 - has been informed by new boss Terry Brown (no relation) that his contract will not be renewed at the end of the season.

Southampton-based Brown has been beset by injuries this term, culminating in him being stretchered off with a serious knee problem against Hemel Hempstead in January after falling victim to a bad challenge. He hadn't long returned to the side after a back complaint.

Ex-Aldershot and AFC Wimbledon manager Brown has also released James

Harper and Ryan Case with immediate effect.

Case, a 22-year-old former AFC Bournemouth academy player, joined Basingstoke in November 2014 from National League side Braintree having previously featured for Dorchester, Havant & Waterlooville and Blackfield & Langley.

Midfielder Harper, 35, has a wealth of experience, including two seasons in the Premier League with Reading.

Brown made an impact in his first game in charge last Saturday, leading bottom-of-the-table Town to a 2-0 home victory over lofty Oxford City who had won their last three games.

The new boss made three changes to the side that had lost at Whitehawk with Rob Rice returning to the back four, ex-Eastleigh skipper Glen Southam coming into midfield and Liam Enver-Marum partnering another former Spitfire Chris Flood in attack.

And it was Enver-Marum who emerged as the match-winning hero, hitting two second-half goals against the ten-man visitors who had had centre-back David King sent off just before the break for a two-footed challenge on Simon Dunn.

Declaring himself "absolutely delighted" with the win, Brown said: "I am proud of every player. I cannot ask for more."

Killick: It would be so wrong to say the ref helped us

Poole boss hits out at Terras' twitter comments

BOSS Tom Killick vehemently refuted suggestions Poole Town had been fortunate to finish with 11 men in Easter Monday's super-charged 1-0 derby triumph at Weymouth.

Killick's Dolphins narrowed the gap on Southern Premier leaders Redditch to one point thanks to Marvin Brooks's header from Steve Devlin's 37th-minute corner.

The Terras claimed via Twitter that Poole's former AFC Bournemouth academy defender and AFC Totton loanee Lewis Lindsay had been "skating on thin ice" after receiving an early booking and that Michael Walker had tripped ex-Cherries midfielder Mark Molesky when through on goal.

But that was not how Killick saw it.

"If Weymouth tried to suggest they had complaints about the referee, then they watched a different game to me," said the Poole boss.

Hard done by

"We felt really hard done by in pretty much every aspect."

"I do not feel it would be in any way appropriate to suggest the referee helped us in any way."

"We were on the wrong end of pretty much everything, but the players stood strong."

Killick added that Lindsay's first-half substitution had been a tactical decision reached on the basis of man-in-the-middle Ben James's performance.

"Lewis got a harsh yellow card quite early and then made a tackle the referee deemed a foul. He was very unfortunate," said the boss.

"Their players put the referee under pressure and he seemed to be influenced quite strongly. We felt that it was too big a risk for us to leave



Flashpoint: Weymouth's Mark Cooper is grounded after a first-half challenge at the Bob Lucas Stadium.

Lewis out there."

Weymouth boss Jason Matthews made no reference to the flashpoints in his post-match summary.

The former Eastleigh goalkeeper said: "I felt we had a few half-chanc-

es, but our set-pieces weren't quite as good as Poole's."

"When you have someone like Devs (Devlin) in their team, he hurts you with his set-pieces and he has done it again."

"We are back to the drawing board and we have left ourselves a mountain to climb to make the play-offs."

● Got a non league story for us? Email wendy.gee@dailyecho.co.uk

All-ticket at St Mary's

THIS month's Hampshire FA Senior Cup final between Winchester City and Havant & Waterlooville at St Mary's is an all-ticket game.

Premier League hosts Southampton use a scanning system for admission and have no facilities to take money on the gate.

It means spectators will be unable to pay at the turnstiles on the night of the Tuesday, April 12 (7.45pm) showdown.

Both Paul Masters' Winchester and Lee Bradbury's Havant have been given tickets to sell in advance, priced £10 for adults and £5 concessions (over-65s, under-16s), and fans are reminded that they are only available for purchase from the clubs.

Winchester have organised a coach to St Mary's, departing the Denplan City Ground at 6pm, priced £10 adults and £5 under-16s.

Havant fans can buy their cup final tickets on matchdays or weekdays from the Westleigh Park club.

Although Southern One South & West underdogs Winchester have been designated as the 'home' side on the night, they will be using the away dressing room at St Mary's.

Saints will not allow the home dressing room to be used, so National League South side Havant will get changed in the physio's room.

● **BILLY** Kee - the forward Eastleigh tried and failed to sign during January's transfer window - has shown why they were prepared to push the boat out for him.

OptaJoe stats released over Easter showed that the Accrington Stanley frontman had been involved in 30 league goals this season - 17 goals, 13 assists - which is more than any other player in the top four tiers.

National League outfit Eastleigh reportedly lodged a "substantial bid" for Kee which was rebuffed by the League Two promotion hunters. Accrington then turned down an improved offer for the stocky-built 25-year-old on transfer deadline day.



Paul Masters.

Non league FOOTBALL



photograph by Hattie Miles ...

Why Mike will be 'impossible' to replace at Poppies

BOSS Ken Vaughan admits Bournemouth Poppies stalwart Mike Robins will be "impossible" to replace when he leaves at the end of the season.

Robins, who has spent more than a decade at Victoria Park, also edits the club's award-winning programme and takes on a bounty of hands-on tasks during matchdays.

A popular figure as a club representative on the Sydenhams Wessex League circuit, Robins is likely to stay involved with the league, but the loss of his Pop-

pies involvement will leave a huge hole at the Dorset outfit.

Vaughan admitted: "I am devastated. Mike has been a great partner; he is first class at what he does and I do not think he can be replaced."

"It will be very hard to find anybody to match his dedication, let alone his ability to do the job. It is an impossible task I think."

"If people feel half as bad as I do, they will be deeply affected by it."

"Mike is part and parcel of the place,

there are not any words that can sum up how badly he will be missed."

"It is not as simple as trying to replace a secretary, he plays a big part in making almost every part of the club function."

"It has been hard work and if he ends up anywhere else, it will be like winning the lottery for any club."

Poppies have yet to fill the vacancy and anyone interested should contact bournemouthpoppiesfc@gmail.com

Early penalty gives Magpies shock win over the leaders

Now Wimborne look certain to avoid the drop

WIMBORNE Town put the cat among the pigeons with a shock 1-0 victory over title favourites Cinderford Town in the Southern One South & West last Saturday.

Incredibly Cinderford's fate was sealed in the opening 26 seconds when former Blackfield & Langley striker Mark Ford was brought down in the box and referee Tony Foster pointed to the spot.

Although Ford's penalty was blocked by Alex Harris, the alert James Stokoe steamed in and clipped the ball home.

It stayed that way until the final whistle – a result that not only gave Cinderford some title jitters but significantly boosted Wimborne's chances of staying in the league.

Bashley are already relegated and, even if the Magpies were to lose all their remaining fixtures, second-to-bottom Burnham would have to win their final five games (starting at AFC Totton today) and make up a mammoth goal difference to overtake them.

Speaking after the game, Wimborne boss Simon Browne said: "I'm pretty sure we have secured our Southern league spot, but it won't make any difference to how we go about our business for the rest of the season.

"It's about building for next season now. We will keep plugging away and try to get as many points as possible.

"When you can beat the leaders, it shows the players are capable of beating every side in the league."

The win was Wimborne's first at home since before Christmas and Browne was delighted by the display.

"We had the wind at our backs first half so we created a little bit more than they did and, in the second half, they pinned us back," he said.

"But the players defended resolutely and did everything we asked of them. They put their bodies on



James Stokoe in action for Wimborne.

the line and the back four were excellent."

So too was on-loan AFC Bournemouth goalkeeper Pat O'Flaherty, who has spent time with AFC Totton in the past.

"Pat was superb," said Browne. "You could have forgiven the odd

handling error due to the conditions, but he was faultless."

"To take four points off Cinderford this season is a pretty decent achievement."

Storm Katie put paid to Wimborne's Easter Monday game at AFC Totton, which has been rearranged for Tues-

day, April 19.

Cinderford's home game with Shortwood did survive the weather, however, and again they dropped points in a 1-1 draw.

As a result, The Foresters lost their place at the top of the pecking order to Banbury, 2-0 winners at Wantage.

Amanda's new role

SALISBURY have appointed an acting chief executive - initially the end of the season. Amanda Newbery, who had been an advisor to the board of Salisbury FC, has taken on day-to-day responsibility for running the ambitious Sydenhams Premier Division club.

The co-owner of the city's Chapel nightclub will be a familiar face to many Whites fans having been stadium manager in the days of Salisbury City.

The move came as the board sought extra help behind the scenes after the strain of recent bumper matchday crowds – including the record breaking 3,450 attendance against Hereford.

The role is initially until the end of the season, but the promotion-hungry SWL leaders could make the move permanent if agreed by both parties.

"Amanda is an exceptionally capable individual who has a wealth of experience of the club," said chairman Dave Phillips. "We are delighted that she has agreed to take on this role."

Newbery, who has worked at the Raymond McEnhill Stadium on and off for ten years, added: "I've always done my best to help the club in any way I could."

"I see this as an extension of my role in helping to progress the club and get it back to where we all want it."

DORCHESTER Town look to have lost their skipper for the remainder of the Southern Premier campaign.

Jake Smeeton will struggle to play again this season after picking up a nasty cut to the ankle in last Saturday's 3-2 win at Bideford.

"I think he got somebody's blade or stud that went straight across him," said Magpies boss Mark Jermyn. "It has split right across and he has had to have it stitched and glued."

"It's a big loss for us because Jake, in my opinion, has been the standout player of the season for us."

"He is one of the players who has enjoyed being at Dorchester and I think that will continue for many seasons to come."



Amanda Newbery

Non league FOOTBALL



Alf Peckham - the man who saved the Wessex!

Ward pays warm tribute to a great 'character'

THEY didn't always see eye-to-eye on football matters. In fact they fought like cat and dog at times.

But John Ward, former chairman of the Hampshire FA, would not have swapped his friendship with Alf Peckham for the world, writes Wendy Gee.

When his phone rang last Sunday morning and Alf's daughter Sandy broke the news that her dad had passed away at Southampton General Hospital, aged 86, Ward knew that local football – and the Wessex League in particular – would never be quite the same.

Alf's legacy as a founder member and former chairman and president of the Wessex League is a superbly run Step 5/6 set-up that can hold its head high among the very best in the country.

And, although he was less actively involved in later life, it was Alf's hard work – and that of his trusty vice-chairman Cyril Hurlock, who also passed away at the turn of the year – that made the Wessex what it is today.

"To say Alf was a character sums him up," said Ward.

"He was a real football person, absolutely dedicated to the Wessex League and, without him and Cyril, I'm not sure the Wessex League, in its early days, would have survived.

"It was controlled by the county FA originally and Alf and Cyril were the two main drivers behind taking it away from the Hampshire FA and making it independent.

"There was opposition at the time and it wasn't formed without some problems, but Alf made sure the league stood up for itself and deserved its position in the system.

"He and Cyril were also the driving forces behind the creation of the Wessex second division and they had lengthy discussions with the Hampshire League about exactly where senior football in the county would go.

"To lose Alf and Cyril within months of each other is a double blow."

If there was one thing Ward, who still sits on the FA as chairman of the Leagues Committee, admired about Alf, it was his no-nonsense approach.

In this ever flakier world where people just tell you what you want to hear, Alf was refreshingly old school.

"You knew exactly where you stood with Alf and I always had massive respect for him," said Ward. "We had some horrendous rows, but then you'd go for a pint together and you'd

Alf Peckham, former Chairman of Wessex League. Inset: John Ward.



see him at the next meeting and there were never any comebacks, he respected your view.

"He was a great assistance to me during my time as county chairman. He could be difficult at times, but he was one of my oldest friends in football and when I found out he wasn't well, I was only too pleased to go and visit him. We had some wonderful trips down memory lane.

"These days Alf would be considered an old-fashioned administrator, but he was always for the Wessex League being about the clubs, not about the officers and committee, and he was very keen on maintaining standards and ground grading.

"He never hid from anything, he never dodged a question and he was a great sounding board for me. If Alf didn't think something was good for

football you needed to take notice, because 99 times out of 100 he was right.

"He was as honest as the day is long – and he'd stand up to the big boys too. If he went to a joint liaison meeting with the Southern League and the FA and he didn't like something, he'd say so!

"It wasn't about the position. For Alf, being chairman was an opportunity to improve things, do what the clubs wanted and make the league as good as it could be.

"Alf saw it as the league's role to give clubs to the upper parts of the league system and also to take clubs back if they had to drop down again and get them back to rude health."

It was also to Alf's eternal credit that he helped broker one of the best sponsorship deals Step 5 football has



Alf WAS Mr Wessex!

THE late Alf Peckham wasn't just any old Sydenhams Wessex League official.

In the eyes of current chairman Ian Hoare, he was way more important than that.

"Alf WAS the Wessex League," he said. "He was involved with it right from the beginning with Ray Barnes, John Ward and Cyril Hurlock. It was his baby and he wanted it to be the best it possibly could be."

Alf had very definite ideas on how the league should be run, writes Wendy Gee.

And Hoare, like many, occasionally felt the sharp side of his tongue. "He wasn't the easiest to get along with sometimes – I had a few tellings-off!" he laughed. "But whatever Alf said, it was always for the right reasons. It was never personal."

"He insisted on standards and that's what we've all tried to keep up."

"I sat with Alf at many a Wessex League dinner-dance and football was all we ever talked about with Alf telling me how I should take the league forward."

"It didn't matter who you were, he was a very straight talker and he would certainly let the FA know if he thought they were in the wrong. He'd say it was his league, I run it, not you!"

Love affair

Alf's love affair with local football began with Millbrook in the Southampton Senior League and he went on to play right-back for Winchester City in their Hampshire League days.

From there he managed Totton Old Boys in the New Forest League Division Two. They merged with Testwood United and, after reaching the Southampton Senior League Division Two, the players renamed the side Totton Athletic, with Alf as team boss.

Another amalgamation between Totton Athletic and Totton FC created AFC Totton, who would go on to become founder members of Alf's new Wessex League.

After around a decade as AFC Totton chairman, Alf became chairman of the Wessex League from 1989 to 2000 and again from 2003 to 2009.

He also had spells as league president and vice-chairman and, for the last seven years, had been executive vice-president.

"We created that post especially for him and I don't think we'll ever put anyone in his place," said Hoare.



Ian Hoare.

Non league FOOTBALL



Alf Peckham (back row second left) was chairman of Totton Athletic when this team picture was taken in September 1969.

So many great memories of Alf ...

PAUL Maiden's fond footballing memories of the late Alf Peckham stretch back further than most.

AFC Totton trustee Maiden, the Stags' facilities and stadium manager, used to play for Alf in the 1970s for the old Totton Athletic club before the amalgamation with Totton FC, writes Wendy Gee.

Even in those days Alf, who would go on to become AFC Totton chairman, was a man who spoke his mind.

"I've got some very fond memories of Alf from the Totton Athletic days," smiled Maiden.

"He was very straight-talking even then. He'd let you know if he didn't think you were pulling your weight!"

"We were a nomadic Hampshire League club playing out at Blackfield on a public recreation ground and, later, at the old Winchester City ground at Airlie Road."

"Alf was manager and myself and Clive 'Brynn' Bratcher, another trustee, played for him."

"We were a team of youngsters and very committed to fundraising and Alf had a part in that. We'd do things like sponsored walks and newspaper runs where we'd collect old newspapers and take them to waste paper company on the Millbrook Estate and get money for them. We were a very active club, but we needed a home to call our own."

Reg Gain was Totton FC chairman at the time and Alf got involved with discussions leading to the two clubs uniting in 1975.

The merger made perfect sense since Totton FC played at Testwood Park but had no money, while Totton Athletic had a bit of money but no permanent abode.

Having become vice-chairman of the new club, Alf left the Stags for a while but was persuaded to return, this time as chairman.

He spent the best part of a decade in the post, laying the foundations for the success story that followed.



Paul Maiden (back row, second right) pictured in a May 1975 Totton Athletic team picture.

The Stags' most prolific season was in 1981/82 when they won Hampshire League Division One for the first time, the Russell Cotes Cup, Hampshire Intermediate Cup, Southampton Senior Cup and Reg Mathieson Trophy. In 1983 they reached the fifth round of the FA Vase, losing 1-0 away to the holders Forest Green Rovers.

In 1986 Alf played a key role in setting up the Wessex League and AFC Totton were one of the founder members.

His commitment to the new league meant him standing down as Stags chairman, but his love affair with the club continued. And there was only place you would find him on a Saturday afternoon once he had finally handed over the Wessex reins to the next gen-

eration.

As one of four trustees with Maiden, Bratcher and Geoffrey Cook, Alf played a big part in overseeing the Stags move to their swish, new Testwood Stadium home in 2011 – and bagged himself a seat right in front of the press box.

"The new stadium was perfect for Alf as his health deteriorated," said Maiden. "He needed a walking stick, but he could get up into the stand in the lift. Everyone knew where Alf's seat was!"

"He was a keen Totton fan and, as long as he was able to, he would come and support the club. Brynn would pick him up and take him home afterwards."

"Alf was such a character. He was always

able to convince people to come around to his way of thinking.

"He was held in such high regard and for me to look back and think I knew Alf even before the 1975 amalgamation is amazing. It's a life span really and it's very sad to have lost him."

"He was a good friend to myself, Brynn and the club and was just the right person to help AFC Totton become the club it is now."

As with the late Pete Chilcott, who has a suite named after him, the Stags will remember Alf. "We will mark Alf's passing and do something to recognise what he meant to the club," said Maiden.

The Stags were holding a minute's silence prior to today's game against Burnham.

Non league FOOTBALL



Alf Peckham/

Alf Peckham's Wessex League 'vision' came true

ALF Peckham's Wessex League vision has been recalled by one of his former AFC Totton trustees.

Former player Clive 'Brynn' Bratcher has paid his own tribute to the one-time Wessex League chairman who passed away last weekend aged 86.

"Alf used to say to us that we

should start a league with teams from Hampshire, Dorset, Wiltshire, Sussex and the Isle of Wight joining forces," Bratcher recalled.

"Alf, of course, saw his dream come to fruition when the Wessex League was launched in 1986."

Bratcher added: "I knew Alf for many years. I played under him, I

worked alongside him on the committee at AFC Totton and I can honestly say he was a true gentleman.

"He may have upset the odd person here and there with what he had to say, but he was never nasty.

"I would go as far as to say he was like a second father to me. He was a great bloke, he really was."



Eastleigh's average home league crowd has risen again this season.

Stewart throws Eastleigh's doors open for FREE again

EASTLEIGH are lining up another free entry game, hoping a packed house will help roar them towards the finish line in the Vanarama National League play-off chase.

For the home showdown against Barrow AFC on Tuesday week (April 12, 7.45pm), everyone will get in FREE of charge.

It's yet another example of how chairman Stewart Donald is delivering on his promise to make football affordable for all at the Silverlake, writes Wendy Gee.

Earlier in the season the Spitfires drew in a bumper Tuesday night crowd of 2,884 for their free entry game against Forest Green Rovers

Chairman Donald hoping for record midweek crowd for Barrow's visit

and they are aiming to break the 3,000 mark this time round.

Donald said: "We would love to try and get a record league midweek attendance."

Confident

"I feel confident that if we have something to play for and with the game under lights, it could be a super opportunity and great atmosphere for us to show off the club to some potential new fans."

Tickets can be obtained in advance

from the Silverlake Stadium or fans can simply turn up at the turnstiles on the evening of the match. The club will not be reserving tickets for collection on this occasion.

According to statistics on the Kings Lynn FC website, Eastleigh are averaging crowds of 1,824 in the league this season - a 4.11 per cent rise on last term's 1,752.

Tranmere are currently top with an average of 4,853 - though that is 6.53 per cent down on last season's League 2 average.

Wrexham are averaging 4,614 and Grimsby 4,423 - increases of 41.36 per cent and 20.09 per cent respectively.

Two Conference North clubs are fourth and fifth in the non league attendance table - FC United of Manchester averaging 3,307 and Stockport County 3,093.

Guards of honour

- Any youth teams or community groups wishing to be part of Eastleigh's big night against Barrow, as either ball boys/girls or guards of honour, should get in contact with the Spitfires.

The club are looking for between 15 and 20 children, aged eight or over, to carry out these duties. Contact Eastleigh FC on 023 8061 3361.

Milestone man Lee

LEE Wort was delighted to mark his return to Sholing with his 300th appearance for his boyhood club.

The 24-year-old striker's last match for the Boatmen had come in the 2014 FA Vase final victory over West Auckland at Wembley, Neil Vincent.

He rejoined Sholing earlier this month following a spell in the National League South with Gosport Borough and reached the 300 milestone in a 0-0 draw at Horndean the Thursday before last.

Wort was thrilled that his second debut for the Boatmen - nine years on from his first - coincided with his 300th outing for the Sydenham Premier side.

"It's great to be back at Sholing for the rest of the season," he said.

"To have the opportunity to play with my mates again is fantastic. I grew up playing football with a lot of these guys and I loved that, so it's good to be back."

"It also gives me a chance to keep myself fit from now until the end of the season."

"I haven't played for Sholing since the FA Vase final and to come back and make my 300th appearance is terrific."

Another recent arrival, Zach Glasspool, made his debut in the Horndean match following his departure from Southern One South & West promotion chasers Winchester City.

Glasspool is a feared striker in the Wessex League after a prolific spell for Alresford Town and revealed he is looking forward to playing regular football.

"I'm looking forward to the new challenge," said the 27-year-old.

"I joined Winchester at the start of last season with Warren (Bentley, from Alresford Town) and had some moments to remember, but it was time for a change a scenery and time to be playing more often."

"I'm positive at Sholing we can finish this season in good form and then next season we can look towards trying to make a run at it in both the league and the cups."



Lee Wort.

Non league FOOTBALL



Matty Fanimo, right.

Jet-heeled Matty gets second chance at Eastleigh

MATTY FANIMO – dubbed one of the fastest footballers on the planet – has been given a second chance by National League promotion hopefuls Eastleigh.

Much was expected of the former West Ham winger when he was unveiled as manager Chris Todd's first signing in October.

But Fanimo, now 22, didn't make an impact and he quietly disappeared off the scene in the midst of the Spittfires' headline-hitting FA Cup run.

It looked like the end of the road for

a player who, as a young Hammer, recorded a top speed equal to Manchester United's jet-heeled Antonio Valencia, who is widely regarded as the world's fastest player.

But, having gone away and got himself fitter, Fanimo has been welcomed back into the Spittfires fold.

Manager Chris Todd said: "I didn't feel it was working out at the time and I told him to go and get himself fit."

"I never doubted his ability, but he was getting frustrated and I didn't believe he

was digging deep enough to keep himself fit."

"But he's gone away and worked with his personal trainer and, to be fair to him, he's come back and is working extremely hard."

When he first signed Fanimo, Todd said: "The English system isn't great for kids. They go to a big club but, after that, where do they go when they get released? Often it's into the wilderness."

"I believe in talent and I believe we can turn Matty into something special."

Kemp's pre-derby Tweets cause big Wessex storm ...

Bemerton boss sorry for social media postings

SALISBURY skipper Kane O'Keefe admitted that pre-match comments on Twitter from Bemerton boss Graham Kemp added extra incentive for his side in Monday's Wiltshire derby.

League leaders Salisbury won the Sydenhams Premier clash 3-1, but the former Bemerton player said Kemp's Tweets in the wake of the FA Vase defeat against Hereford had touched a nerve in the dressing room, writes Alex Rennie.

Kemp wrote on social media: "Just checked. Salisbury is still 82.7 miles from Wembley. #cheatsneverprosper" and "@twenty3four my opinion is well known for any club. Pay money you can't afford and win trophies and go bust is cheating. Live to your means".

The comments - alluding to the old Salisbury City club which went out of business - caused a storm amongst Whites fans on social media with many threatening to boycott the bank holiday game.

In the end, a healthy crowd of 620 were at Western Way to see goals from O'Keefe, Ashley Jarvis and Stephen Walker seal a comfortable win.

After the game Whites boss Steve Claridge and director Ian Ridley both exchanged words outside the changing rooms with Kemp.

However, when asked about the spat, Claridge took a more conciliatory tone.

"I don't watch [social media] or go on it so I have no idea what happened," he said. "All I wanted was to win a game of football."

"Salisbury supporters wanted to win this game more than any of the others. It was another game that we had to win and we have done it. Move on."

Kemp, who has been at the helm at Western Way for just over a year, apologised to Salisbury fans after the



Bemerton boss Graham Kemp.

game.

"For me it is a storm in a teacup," said the former Christchurch, Winchester City and Dorchester boss.

"I'll hold my hands up, I sent out a tweet last week but for me it only went to my friends."

"I don't have loads of followers, but then someone has forwarded it on. I'm not blaming anyone else, it is my fault for posting it."

"But I have stayed off it since, I

have not tried to inflame the situation. I sent one tweet and just blocked everyone's responses because it got out of hand."

"I can understand it has touched a nerve with Salisbury and for that I apologise, it wasn't meant as an inflammatory thing."

The Bemerton manager also spoke of his frustration at his side's slow start - Salisbury scored twice in the opening 20 minutes.

"I spoke before the game about being on the front foot and getting in their faces but we conceded after pretty much their first decent attack," he said. "It just knocked the confidence out of us. We gave them two soft goals and the lads knew at half-time they had not done themselves justice."

"I couldn't fault my players. The first thing you have to give is 100 per cent and that is what they all gave."

Top Mark for Town

ROMSEY Town returned to winning ways after an early goal proved to be the difference against in-form Christchurch at Hurn Bridge last Saturday.

Manager Andy Samuels' hopes of grabbing the initiative early were answered in fine style. Just four minutes into the game, a long kick from goalkeeper Amadeusz Skrzyniarz reached its intended target of captain and striker Dan Fox, who controlled the ball superbly.

Fox slid it into the path of Mark Irvine, whose finish wrong-footed Priory keeper Andy Knights to give Town the lead.

That, coupled with a Skrzyniarz penalty save, proved enough to seal the three points - and dent Christchurch's Sydenhams One promotion hopes.

It was the fourth spot-kick Romsey's keeper had made this term.

Describing his side as "fantastic", Samuels said of the 1-0 win: "It was a huge reaction after the Laverstock defeat. We were excellent from the start and I'm thoroughly delighted."

"We defended resolutely and today's performance shows what myself and Dave (Hazelgrove, assistant) expect."

"We have an honest, hard-working bunch of players who we can trust when they are on top of their game."

"When we play teams in and around the top six it gives us a chance to stamp our authority on the game and show how far we've come in my time in charge."

"Christchurch are a really good side and we were under the cosh in the second-half, but we did such a good job that they started to run out of ideas."

Samuels, as ever, was keen to praise the youth in his side.

"Josh Graham was handed his first start and he coped well as he had to learn the pace of Wessex League football."

"Will Wiseman was exceptional, especially as he played a lot of the game on a yellow card."

"Christchurch have got some good strikers and Will marked them out of the game."



Mark Irvine scores Romsey's winner against Christchurch.

Doukara joins the biting roll call of shame

LEEDS forward Souleymane Doukara has been banned for eight matches by the FA for biting Fulham defender Fernando Amorebieta during last month's Championship 1-1 draw at Elland Road.

Here, the Sports Pink looks at other incidents where biting has occurred in professional sport.

Luis Suarez (soccer)

Suarez has thrice found himself in the middle of biting incidents. Firstly, while playing for Ajax he was given a seven-game ban for sinking his teeth into PSV's Otman Bakkal. He left Holland for Liverpool but got into biting trouble there when he attacked Chelsea's Branislav Ivanovic. The FA gave him a 10-match ban. Finally, at the 2014 World Cup he did the same to Italy's Giorgio Chiellini, resulting in a worldwide ban of four months.

Mike Tyson on Evander Holyfield (boxing)

The most notorious incident of biting in sport was when Tyson got his teeth into Holyfield and tore a chunk off his heavyweight rival's ear during their world title fight in 1997. Tyson was disqualified, but later had his boxing licence reinstated.



Serial biter Luis Suarez.

Johan Le Roux on Sean Fitzpatrick (rugby union)

New Zealand were heading towards a win over South Africa in 1994 when Le Roux clearly bit Fitzpatrick. Replays showed Fitzpatrick wincing in pain as Le Roux drew blood. The South African was sent home in disgrace, banned for 17 months and his international career ended.

Dylan Hartley on Stephen Ferris (rugby union)

England hooker and current captain Hartley was suspended for eight weeks for biting Ireland's Stephen Ferris in 2012. There was no television evidence, but Hartley was found guilty. A sterner penalty had been anticipated due to a 26-week ban for gouging in 2007. However, his good behaviour in the intervening period was taken into account.

Miguel Olivo on Alex Guerrero (baseball)

Two team-mates on the Albuquerque Isotopes - a minor league team affiliated with the Los Angeles Dodgers - got into a confrontation during a game in 2014, and the incident ended with Guerrero requiring plastic surgery after having a chunk of his ear bitten off. Olivo was released by the Dodgers organisation two days later.

SAINTS legend Lawrie McMenemy's first ever autobiography is released next week.

'A Lifetime's Obsession' is released on Thursday, April, and lifts the lid on McMenemy's entire career in the game.

The 1976 FA Cup final winning manager talks candidly about some of the huge names he brought to the Dell during his 12 years in charge of Saints - including Kevin Keegan, Alan Ball, Peter Osgood and Mick Mills.

There is also a chapter devoted to Saints' remarkable FA Cup victory over Manchester United, which all Dell supporters will enjoy reading.

McMcenemy also reveals how he felt betrayed by Graham Taylor, who was adamant that McMenemy should not be allowed to replace him as England manager.

Here, in an exclusive extract for the Sports Pink, McMenemy writes about the times when he was courted by other clubs to become their manager.

In it, McMenemy reveals just why he turned down the chance in 1981 to take over at one of the most famous clubs in the world, Manchester United.

'SOUTHAMPTON'S success reflected well on me as the manager.'

It resulted in a number of job offers which, apart from one, never made it into the newspapers or the boardroom. They included approaches and offers from Everton, Leeds United and my boyhood favourites Newcastle United.

Arsenal also contacted me but that approach reached the ears of my chairman George Reader. It was a tentative approach from Arsenal that I dismissed as too tentative to consider until I received a call one evening from our chairman.

The old boy could be quite gruff when he wanted or needed to be.

"Manager," he said. "Talk about Arsenal."

I was shocked he knew I had been contacted, though I should not have been. I pretended to know nothing and that is almost true.

The chairman added: "If we don't want you to go, they'll never take you."

He was telling me there was a special relationship between Southampton and Arsenal through directors

like our chairman and extraordinarily well-connected directors such as Sir George Meyrick.

Ipswich Town were also life members of the three-club clique with their boardroom friendships.

Arsenal never developed beyond the one distant contact and the warning call from Mr Reader.

The Newcastle approach came directly through the club's chairman Lord Westwood who was blind in an eye he covered with a black patch. I am told by a friend that during one desperately poor performance from Newcas-



Lawrie McMenemy with Ted Bates and the FA Cup.



Lawrie McMenemy is mobbed after Saints had reached the 1979 League Cup final.



Lawrie McMenemy with Kevin Keegan, pictured in 2011.



Lawrie McMenemy at St Mary's, 2007

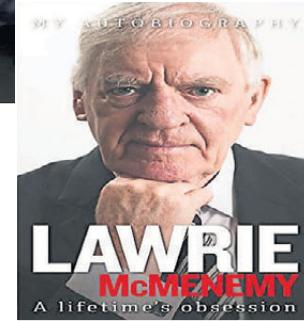
te my mate looked towards the directors box to see Lord Westwood switch the

patch from his good eye to the bad. Unlikely? Not if you knew his Lordship, who was a great character.

He wanted me and offered me the job to replace Gordon Lee. I thanked Lord Westwood and said

no. It was down to timing. There is no way I could seriously discuss moving from Southampton when Lord Westwood's approach came between our FA Cup semi final and the final in April 1976.

Manny Cussins, the chairman of Leeds United, tracked me down to California where we were on holi-



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ned down Man United



Lawrie McMenemy receives the freedom of the city from the Southampton Mayor in 2007.



Gordon Strachan, Paul McCarthy, Lawrie McMenemy and Mark Dennis at South Winchester Golf Club.



Lawrie McMenemy with his FA Cup winners medal, received 30 years later.



Lawrie McMenemy with his family and the FA Cup, 1976.



Terry Curran, Alan Ball and Lawrie McMenemy after reaching the 1979 League Cup final.

day with another family. His call came through to our hotel with a definite request to join him at Elland Road.

Everton sent a representative of the board run by John Moores Senior of the pools company. The man Moores sent

was a stranger to me. He found my address, knocked on my door and was matter-of-fact in his approach and polite in the extreme.

"Can I ask you a question, straight to the point?" he asked. "Would you be interested in taking over as manager of Everton Football Club?"



Lawrie McMenemy welcomes Dave Watson to The Dell, October 1979.

Each positive contact I considered and on each occasion decided I had a satisfying job. I was happy and my family was

happy so why should I leave? What would the benefits be? We were better than them and continuing to progress. Three were genuine up front offers (Arsenal's was a

half-try) and all were declined. These contacts have never been made public. Why should they have been?

The one approach and offer that made the headlines was the one I received from Manchester United in 1981.

Continued on page 18

New sporting challenge for Sir Chris Hoy

SIR Chris Hoy is looking to join an illustrious band of athletes who have excelled at more than one sport in the course of their careers.

The six-time Olympic cycling champion will fulfil a lifelong dream by competing in the Le Mans 24 Hour race in June.

Here, the Sports Pink looks at some who preceded him in multi-sport endeavours.

Victoria Pendleton: Completed her transformation from Olympic champion cyclist to National Hunt winner in March when she claimed her first victory as an amateur rider at Wincanton, racing home on 5-4 favourite Pacha Du Polder and then finished fifth in the Foxhunter Chase for amateur jockeys at the Cheltenham Festival. She previously won nine world cycling titles between 2005 and 2012, and secured Olympic gold medals in 2008 (sprint) and 2012 (keirin).

Lottie Dod: Dod is best known for winning five Wimbledon titles between 1887 and 1893, the first when she was just 15 years old. But she also won the British Women's Amateur Golf Championship, played hockey for England, and won silver in the 1908 Olympic archery event.



Sir Chris Hoy at the O2 Arena this week.

Ellyse Perry: Perry has played for Australia in both cricket and football. With the former, she won the 2013 World Cup and the 2015 Ashes, in which she was named player of the series. Perry, a defender, also played in the 2011 football World Cup in Germany.

Kevin Moran: Moran's Gaelic football career saw him win All-Ireland Championship medals with Dublin in 1976 and 1977. Moran signed for Manchester United the following year, going on to win two FA Cups, and he was a member of two Republic of Ireland World Cup squads.

Denis Compton: Perhaps the greatest British multi-sportsman, Compton played in 78 Test matches and scored over 100 first-class hundreds for Middlesex. He also played football for Arsenal, winning the league title in 1948 and the FA Cup two years later.

Sir Ian Botham: The former England Test cricket captain is widely regarded as his country's greatest all-rounder. He scored 14 centuries and took 383 wickets in Test matches. An occasional footballer as well, he featured 11 times in the Football League as a centre-back for Scunthorpe and also had a spell with Yeovil.

Gary Neville didn't reign in Spain at all

GARY NEVILLE was the latest British manager to try his hand at management abroad but the former England defender has now been sacked as Valencia's head coach.

Here, the Sports Pink looks at some of the other managerial hits and misses to leave these shores for Spain.

DAVID MOVES

The former Manchester United manager took over at Real Sociedad in November 2014. After a bright start at the Anoeta Stadium, Moyes soon became a target for fans of the Basque outfit and was sacked a day short of his one-year anniversary on November 9.

CHRIS COLEMAN

Wales boss Coleman can also mark Real Sociedad down on his CV and it is fair to say he had more success with Erealia than Moyes prior to his sudden departure in January 2008. Coleman pitched up in Spain in June 2007 after being recommended by fellow Welshman - and another ex-Sociedad boss - John Toshack. An impressive record of 12 wins from 21 games saw Sociedad move up to fifth in the Segunda Division but a bust-up with the club's president, Inaki Badiola, saw him resign less than seven months into his tenure.

SIR BOBBY ROBSON

Robson won the Copa del Rey,



England coach Gary Neville was sacked by Valencia this week.

Spanish Super Cup and European Cup Winners' Cup with Barcelona between 1996 and 1997. The signing of Brazilian superstar Ronaldo was a masterstroke, and the European Manager of the Year for 1996-97 also nurtured a young translator by the name of Jose Mourinho.

JOHN TOSHACK

Toshack had three spells as boss of Sociedad but two stints at Real Madrid is where the Welshman is best remembered. The former Liverpool forward delivered a La Liga title for Real in 1990, won the Copa del Rey for Sociedad in 1987 and also managed Deportivo and Real Murcia in Spain.

TERRY VENABLES

The former England boss secured Barca their first league title in 11 years in 1985 and followed that up with success in the Copa de la Liga the following season. Venables was denied success in the European Cup final in 1986 by Steaua Bucharest on penalties and his tenure came to an end in September 1987.

RON ATKINSON

Atkinson's spell as Atletico Madrid boss lasted just three months in 1988-1989 before his assistant from West Brom - Colin Addison - replaced him. Trigger-happy president Jesus Gil sacked Atkinson after just 93 days in charge.

from page 17

Martin Edwards made contact by phone on behalf of the club and offered me the job.

They Southampton directors were determined to keep me. They threw the fact at me that I was under contract and then those 'benign' olde-worlde gentlemen directors reiterated that I had to continue as manager of Southampton FC. They expected me to honour my contract. No messing.

In 30 years they had to deal with two managers, Ted Bates and myself. They were not easily swayed by insubordination.

They looked after you so you must look after them. That was their creed. They saw all the talk about Old Trafford as an aggravation they did not need and would not tolerate.

I did not have to be educated on how big a club United were, massive compared to any I had been involved with. Sheffield Wednesday was big when I joined them in the Sixties but United was an institution.

That meant the manager would have so many things other than pure football matters to contend with. I thought I could have handled that despite it being the hardest aspect of the job, the one managers found most difficult to cope with.

For me it would also have meant uprooting the family but that comes with the job. We

were used to so many moves in a relatively short space of time from Gateshead to Sheffield to Doncaster, Grimsby and Southampton.

Potential trauma

At that stage our elder son Chris would have been

19 and while the others were not babies it would have meant a huge amount of organisation for Anne, Sean and Alison.

The security of my family and their rights as youngsters in the middle of their education - the potential trauma involved in changing school - was an important factor in my decision.

I never talked money with Martin. I assumed money would not be a problem. It would have been the best of everything.

That is the way the club is and continues to be.

It was a family thing. I did not want to put the children through what would be a dramatic change at the very time they needed stability and both Anne and myself as a presence in their lives.

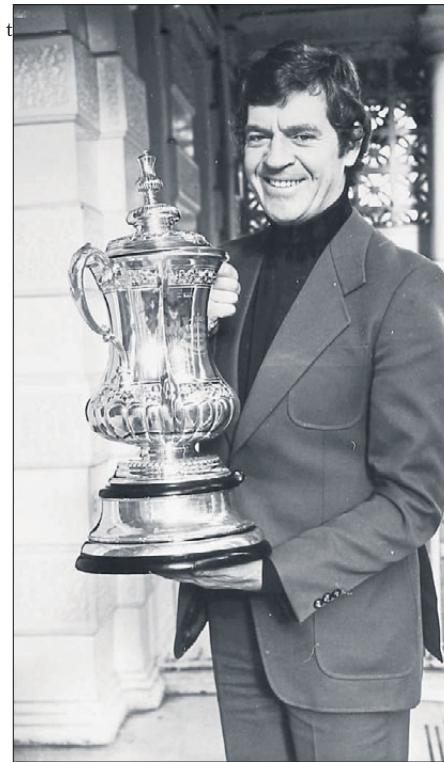
I was proved right when I later foolishly left Southampton for Sunderland, a move that had a serious effect on my family.

I agree that managing United could have been the highlight, the pinnacle, the peak of a career if you had been successful - and you would have to have been that.

I could have taken the family to



Lawrie McMenemy gives actress Britt Ekland a kiss.



Lawrie McMenemy with the FA Cup in 1976.



Lawrie McMenemy is joined by Tommy Docherty and his Saints squad on the 30th anniversary of the FA Cup win.

Manchester overnight and stayed in the best hotel suites or a rented house. That was not

the problem. It was the effect on your family life of moving on after being in one place for eight years. We had formed friendships as a family and living on the south coast is a bit different.

was not fear of the job; I wasn't chicken out.

I understand the question remains; can a football person turn down Manchester United?

You would have to say only one in a hundred would. But I didn't need

United to satisfy my ambitions. As I saw it I could continue successfully at Southampton.

We were a top six club dabbling in Europe and I felt we were good enough to hit the heights.

Ted Bates, wily fox that he was, put it in perspective for me. He asked if I could achieve with Unit-

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satisfy my ambitions



Lawrie McMenemy and members of his Saints squad pictured with some Vietnamese boat children in Southampton, 1979.



Lawrie McMenemy and Tommy Docherty share a joke at the Peter Osgood memorial match in 2006.



Lawrie McMenemy and his Saints squad on board HMS Southampton at Vospers Thorneycroft, Woolston, February 1979.



Lawrie McMenemy, Matt Le Tissier and Jimmy Case.

ed that I couldn't at Southampton.

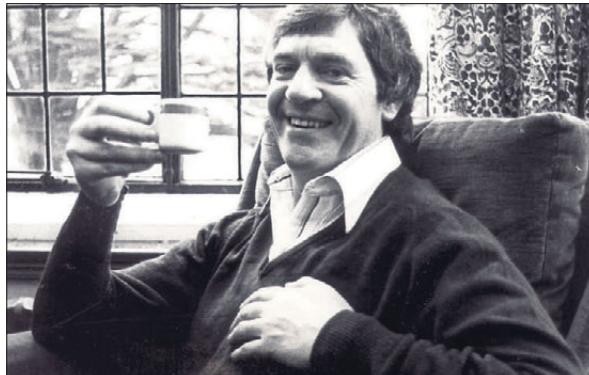
He said I would get greater satisfaction from winning

the league with Southampton than I would with United. While people may laugh at the assertion now, it should be remembered we did finish second in the league

while I was at Southampton.

What he said struck a nerve; it made sense.

The consolation I had in turning them down was that each year after that we finished higher up the league than Manchester United, having beaten them at Wembley.



Lawrie McMenemy prior to the 1979 League Cup final.

As a professional do I regret it?

Well, I wonder how far I could have taken them.'

● *Lawrie McMenemy A Life-time's Obsession My Autobiography, RRP £18.99, Trinity Mirror Sport Media. On sale from*

7th April from Amazon, Waterstones, WHSmiths and sportmediashop.com

● Don't miss another extract in next Thursday's Daily Echo and the chance to win a signed copy of Lawrie McMenemy's autobiography.

Great players who failed as a manager

GARY Neville is not the first - and certainly will not be the last - great player to struggle in management.

The former Manchester United right-back was sacked this week after just four turbulent months at the Valencia helm.

Here, the Sports Pink picks out five other former England internationals to falter as managers.

ALAN SHEARER

The Newcastle job was the striker's rite of passage, but coaching his boyhood club did not go to plan. Shearer was handed the reins for the final eight games of the 2008/09 season and tasked with saving them from the drop. Instead, the Magpies' 16-year stay in the Premier League came to an end and he left to continue a career in the media.

JOHN BARNES

An exceptional player in his day, the former Watford and Liverpool winger flopped as a manager. The famous headline of 'Super Caley Go Ballistic Celtic Are Atrocious' came after Barnes' Celtic fell to a 3-1 home defeat to Inverness in the Scottish Cup in 2000. His spell as Jamaica manager was okay, but his last job at Tranmere certainly was not. He was sacked in October 2009 after winning just two of 11 matches in League One.



Bobby Charlton, right of picture, didn't make a great manager.

SIR BOBBY CHARLTON

Key to the 1966 World Cup triumph and Manchester United's successes, Charlton tried his hand at management in 1973. The decision to join Preston was met by excitement that soon dissipated as they were relegated to Division Three in his first season, before resigning in protest against the board proceeding with the transfer of John Bird to Newcastle. Charlton was caretaker boss at Wigan during the 1982/83 campaign but did not return to the dugout after that.

SIR GEOFF HURST

Another World Cup winner and knight of the realm unable to successfully transfer his skills into management, Hurst tried his luck at non-league Telford United and later took charge at Chelsea - a far cry from the modern side we know today. An initial positive start soon petered out and the striker was sacked in 1981, when he signed on the dole. A spell in charge of Kuwait SC followed but that was his last management gig.

CHRIS WADDLE

Arriving at Burnley to much fanfare in 1997, it proved Waddle's first and only job in management. A terrible start to the season was overcome by a revival midway through the campaign, allowing them to maintain their Second Division status on the last day.

Betting breaches

MANCHESTER City defender Martin Demichelis was charged by the FA this week with misconduct in relation to betting.

The Argentinian is alleged to have committed "12 breaches of FA rule E8 concerning football matches between 22 January 2016 and 28 January 2016".

Here, the Sports Pink recounts five instances of betting regulation breaches in football, when punishments were handed out.

ANDROS TOWNSEND
England midfielder Townsend was fined £18,000 by the Football Association in June 2013 while a Tottenham player, after he admitted breaching betting regulations. He received a four-month suspension, three months of which were suspended until July 1, 2016. Townsend voluntarily withdrew from England's squad for the 2013 European Under-21 Championship. Townsend now plays for Newcastle.

CAMERON JEROME
Striker Jerome was fined £50,000 in August 2013 for breaking FA betting rules. Jerome, a Stoke player at the time, who is now with Norwich,



Dexter Blackstock

was also severely warned by the FA about his future conduct following an independent regulatory commission hearing.

DAN GOSLING
Midfielder Gosling was fined £30,000 by the FA in March 2014 for breaching betting rules, while a Newcastle player. He admitted a misconduct charge following what were described as "multiple breaches" of the rules. Gosling is now with Bournemouth.

DEXTER BLACKSTOCK
Former Saints striker Blackstock received a three-month ban in May 2014, suspended until May 31 this year, and was fined £60,000 after the Nottingham Forest forward admitted multiple breaches of betting rules.

RONNIE MOORE
Moore, while manager of Tranmere, received a one-month suspended ban and £2,000 fine from the FA in April 2014 in relation to breaching betting rules. Moore, who had been suspended by Tranmere until the FA investigation was concluded, was then dismissed by them, with Rovers stating the club would not "tolerate any action that damages the integrity of this football club".

Lawrie McMenemy's life and times at Saints



Lawrie McMenemy welcomes Phil Boyer and Ted MacDougall to The Dell in the summer of 1977.



Lawrie McMenemy and the Saints team prepare to fly off after their 1976 FA Cup final success.



Game off! Lawrie McMenemy in The Dell mud in the 1970s.



Lawrie McMenemy and Leon Crouch, second right next to Lawrie, once had an executive box at St Mary's.



Always in demand. Lawrie McMenemy signs autographs outside St Mary's.



Lawrie McMenemy pictured with the late, great Alan Ball and entertainer Mike Osman.



Lawrie McMenemy and Spurs boss Keith Burkinshaw appeal for calm on the terraces before a crucial Second Division game at The Dell in April 1978.

Lawrie McMenemy's life and times



Lawrie McMenemy welcomes Alan Ball back to The Dell as manager in January 1994.



Lawrie McMenemy and Kevin Keegan at a book signing session in 1981.



Lawrie McMenemy looks on as Rueban Agboola gets a kiss for being awarded a player of the year trophy.



Lawrie McMenemy with current Saints chairman Ralph Krueger



Lawrie McMenemy with Graeme Souness and, above, pictured with the FA Cup sitting on a commemorative bench.



Lawrie McMenemy lands in Lisbon in 1981.



Lawrie McMenemy listens to disc jockey Mike Read at St Mary's.

What we learned from friendly loss

ENGLAND'S momentum from their impressive victory in Germany was halted as Holland came from behind to beat Roy Hodgson's men 2-1 at Wembley.

Jamie Vardy put the Three Lions ahead at the end of the first half, but Vincent Janssen's penalty and Luciano Narsingh's goal 13 minutes from time sealed England's defeat.

Here, the Sports Pink looks at five things we learned from the friendly:

1. Holland deliver timely reality check

The 3-2 win in Germany was rightly greeted with optimism and excitement about England's emerging crop of talent. But, if a dose of realism were needed, Holland provided it.

England lacked the urgency and verve they showed in Berlin and, while Vardy's goal came at the end of a sumptuous team move, defensive frailties at the other end once again served to check any overblown expectations for the summer. England are a work in progress and this display highlighted as much.

2. Drinkwater debut assured if unspectacular

Danny Drinkwater is not the sort of player to light up a game with a moment of brilliance, but instead he put in the kind of controlled performance that has made him so integral to Leicester's success this season.

He kept the ball with intelligence and composure, allowing the more creative players in front of him to do their work unrestrained and, while it may not be enough to put him ahead of Eric Dier in the current pecking order, there was undoubtedly enough in Drinkwater's display to suggest he can be an important member of Hodgson's final squad.

3. Vardy form too hot to ignore

The Leicester striker was arguably the biggest winner from England's two friendlies, scoring twice and giving further ammunition to those who believe he warrants a place ahead of captain Wayne Rooney.

Harry Kane's fine finish against Germany and his own



Jamie Vardy (left) and Jeffrey Bruma.

superb form for Tottenham has certainly made it extremely difficult for Hodgson to pick the Manchester United striker ahead of either of the in-form duo.

Rooney has three more friendlies to make his case and Hodgson may yet plump for all three.

4. Full-backs crucial to England success

Vardy's goal against Germany came after a cross from the right-back, then ex-Saint Nathaniel Clyne, and so it was again Kyle Walker this time cut the ball back for the Leicester man to sweep home.

England's full-backs were their best attacking outlet throughout, with Danny Rose also posing a threat down the left, and Hodgson should be brave enough to give freedom to what are positions of attacking strength.

He might even consider replicating Tottenham's policy of rotating on both sides during Euro 2016 to keep the likes of Rose and Walker fresh.

5. Football shows its power to unite again

England's last home game at Wembley, against France, witnessed a series of moving tributes to those killed in last year's terror attacks in Paris and there was another poignant show of unity again as the stadium impeccably observed a minute's silence before the match in memory of the victims of last week's attacks in Brussels, while the players wore black armbands.

Johan Cruyff was also remembered as supporters gave the Holland great a standing ovation in the 14th minute.

Cruyff, who died of cancer last Thursday, wore the number 14 during his career.

Rory McIlroy tries again to complete the Grand Slam after noble failure

WITH the first major of the year just days away, the Sports Pink looks at five talking points ahead of the Masters at Augusta National.

1. Can Rory McIlroy complete the career grand slam?

McIlroy's first attempt to join Gene Sarazen, Ben Hogan, Gary Player, Jack Nicklaus and Tiger Woods in winning all four major titles ended in noble failure, the 26-year-old finishing fourth with a 12-under-par total which has only been bettered four times since 2000. It was McIlroy's misfortune that two rounds of 71 left him in an incredible 12 shots behind the record pace set by Jordan Spieth, meaning that scores of 68 and 66 on the weekend succeeded only in cutting his deficit in half. However, that still represented McIlroy's best finish at Augusta - he was eighth in 2014 and 15th after blowing a four-shot lead in 2011 - and the four-time major winner believes he is better equipped to deal with the hype this time around. The Northern Irishman is disappointed to be the only player in the world's top six not to have won so far in



Rory McIlroy.

2016, but could benefit from the focus being spread between other potential champions.

2. Can Spieth defend his title?
The answer to that question appeared an unequivocal 'yes' when the 22-year-old started the year by shooting 30 under par to win the Tournament of Champions by eight shots in Hawaii, but all has not been well since. Spieth admitted he needed to lower his expectations after a phenomenal 2015 and conceded that losing his status as world number one to the in-form Jason Day might work in his favour heading to Augusta, hardly the statements of a man in top form. Playing partner Henrik Stenson felt a busy worldwide schedule meant Spieth was "running a bit out of steam" following the American's opening 76 in the defence of his Valspar Championship title, while a 79 in the Northern Trust Open was the worst opening round of Spieth's career.

3. Is a shock winner possible?
Since Darren Clarke and Keegan Bradley won the last two majors of 2011 when ranked 111th and 108th in the world

respectively, the lowest ranked winner of any major has been Ernie Els, who was 40th when he won the 2012 Open at Lytham. In 2015, Spieth was fourth and second respectively before his Masters and US Open triumphs, Zach Johnson 25th before winning the Open at St Andrews and Day fifth before his victory in the US PGA Championship at Whistling Straits. With Spieth, Day, Bubba Watson, Adam Scott and Charl Schwartzel all in the winner's circle already in 2016, the smart money will be on a player inside the world's top 20 keeping the trend going at Augusta.

4. Can a European triumph again?

The sad news that double Masters champion Jose Maria Olazabal would not be able to compete due to illness brought home the fact that the Spaniard's second victory in 1999 remains the last by a European, a stark contrast to the time when Seve Ballesteros, Bernhard Langer, Sandy Lyle, Nick Faldo, Ian Woosnam and Olazabal enjoyed unrivalled success at Augusta. Justin

Life and times of Lawrie McMenemy



Lawrie McMenemy with new signing Gerry O'Brien.



Lawrie McMenemy with John Mortimore.



Lawrie McMenemy speaks at the civic reception following Saints' 1976 FA Cup final victory.



Lawrie McMenemy practises his heading.



Lawrie McMenemy goes up to receive a Lifetime Achievement award at a special dinner in 2011.



Lawrie McMenemy pulls off his greatest ever signing in February 1980 - Kevin Keegan. Also pictured are Steve Williams, Chris Nicholl, Alan Ball and Dave Watson.



Lawrie McMenemy takes his seat on a special bench to commemorate Saints' 1976 FA Cup final win.

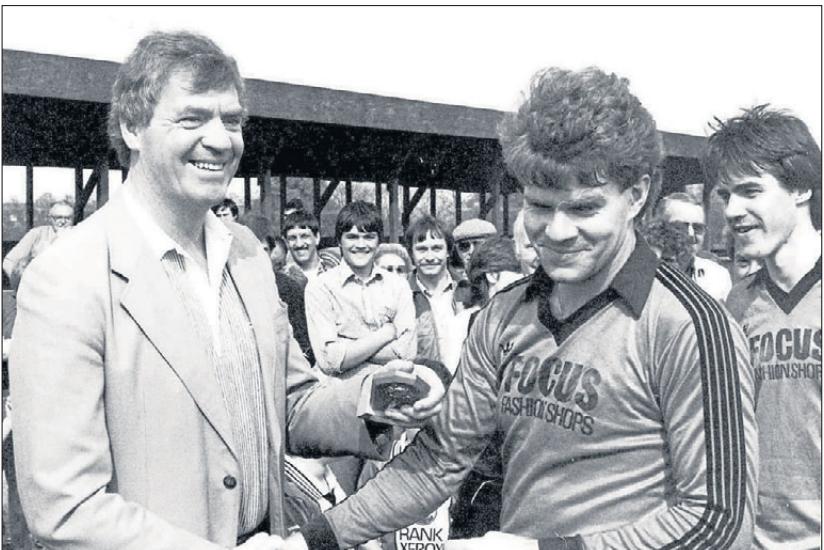


Lawrie McMenemy meets some Duke of Edinburgh volunteers.

Lawrie's life and times



Lawrie McMenemy lines up with his Saints team in the summer of 1974.



Lawrie McMenemy presents his son Chris with a medal at a football tournament.



Nice ties! Lawrie McMenemy signs Peter Osgood in March 1974.



Lawrie McMenemy enjoys a laugh with Eric Morecambe in the 1980s.



Lawrie McMenemy at the end of the 1976 FA Cup semi final win over Crystal Palace.



Lawrie McMenemy enjoys a laugh in training prior to the FA Cup final.



The Saints bench at the final whistle in the 1976 FA Cup final.



Lawrie McMenemy with Mick Channon, Peter Osgood, Peter Rodrigues and Jim McCalliog in 1976.

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M Froud	Eastleigh, Hants	M Ryves	Southampton, Hants
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DAILY ECHO

HAMPSHIRE CRICKET 2015



15 glorious years at the Ageas Bowl

HAMPSHIRE Cricket's Ageas Bowl celebrates its 15th birthday this year.

The brand new stadium was unveiled at the start of the 2001 domestic season, and has gone on to make its mark.

The ground is now a regular stager of international one-day matches, and has staged two Test matches.

Hampshire chairman Rod Bransgrove – the man whose vision made the venue reality – is still waiting for the icing on the cake, however.

But surely an Ashes Test match will one day be played in West End?

Here, the Sports Pink looks back at some of the highlights of the Ageas Bowl's life.

Highest score

Hampshire's all-time highest Championship score was recorded at The Ageas Bowl in September 2005.

John Crawley compiled a triple century as the county rattled up 714-5 declared against a Nottinghamshire side who had just been crowned county champions.

Crawley was on 311, needing only six more to beat Richard Moore's all-time record of 316 not out in 1937, when Shane Warne declared.

Warne brought the players in, with Crawley on the brink of history, after Dimi Mascarenhas had completed his century.

Jono McLean (67), Simon Katich (53) and Jimmy Adams (50) also compiled half-centuries in a match Hampshire went on to win by an innings and 188 runs.

- Lancashire scored the highest Ageas Bowl total against Hampshire in August 2009.

Helped by VVS Laxman's 135, the visitors posted 568-5 declared.

Other major contributions came from Tom Smith (95), Francois du Plessis (86no), Mark Chilton (81) and Mal Loyer (61). The match was drawn.

Lowest team score

Daren Powell and James Bruce shared the bowling honours when Worcestershire were skittled out for just 86 in August 2007.

Replying to Hampshire's 455-9 total, the visitors' paltry effort remains the lowest team total at the Ageas Bowl in the venue's 15-year history.

Powell dismissed both openers – Phil Jaques and Steven Moore – for a duck on his way to 4-8 off 10 overs, while Bruce weighed in with 4-21. David Griffiths (2-33) was Hampshire's other wicket-taker. Hampshire eventually won by a huge 285 runs.

- Billy Taylor claimed a hat-trick en route to career best figures in May 2006 when Middlesex visited.

Taylor dismissed Nick Compton,



Australia's Aaron Finch celebrates reaching his century in the T20 international against England in 2013.



New Zealand's Martin Guptill holds the record for the highest one-day score at The Ageas Bowl.

Paul Weekes and Ben Scott in successive balls en route to a 6-32 haul as the visitors were shot out for 98 on the first day. That remains the second lowest Championship team total ever recorded at the Ageas Bowl.

- Highest innnings

John Crawley's 311 not out against

Nottinghamshire in 2005 remains the highest individual innings at the Ageas Bowl.

Mind you, it could have been beaten six years later. Michael Carberry was 300 not out when Hampshire declared after reaching 599-3 against Yorkshire in August 2011.

Replying to the Tykes' 532 all out,



John Crawley reaches 300 against Nottinghamshire in 2005.

Carberry and Neil McKenzie (237) put on 523 for the third wicket. That established a new third-wicket County Championship record.

Phil Jaques holds the record for the highest Championship innings against Hampshire at the West End

Continued on page 26

Sammy: We'll win

WEST Indies captain Darren Sammy says his side is driven by a desire to prove their detractors wrong.

Sammy was in rare form on the eve of the World Twenty20 final against England, cracking jokes and flashing his 100-watt smile throughout his press conference but also responded with searing passion to the criticism the West Indies have been subjected to.

The Windies boast some of T20 cricket's most dangerous players and are ranked number two in the world, but were not rated among the favourites in India and had few high-profile advocates.

Broadcaster Mark Nicholas dismissed them as being "short of brains" in a tournament preview, words which have fuelled them on their charge to the final.

"People paint us as money-grabbing cricketers because of our success in T20 cricket but still they don't respect us in this format," he said.

"Everybody is entitled to their opinion. But whatever they say it doesn't really matter."

"How could you describe people with 'no brains'. Animals (have) got brains. We're not an object."

"To me that particular comment really set it off for us. To describe our team, who were defending champions two years ago, as guys with no brains is really out of order."

"Gods don't love the ugly. We're very wonderfully, beautifully made and that's why we play exciting cricket."

Expect to see that last line on a T-shirt sometime soon, but Sammy is full of wonderful turns of phrase.

Having billed his team's semi-final against India as David versus Goliath, he was asked which of the two roles they would take against England.

"We are always David. David is a winner," he said.

"Even now I still think people don't give us a chance. Goliath is big and strong but David defeated him with one shot."

"If we do all the things we know we can do, we're going to lift the cup."



Darren Sammy in action.

HAMPSHIRE CRICKET 2015



FOUR REASONS FOR ENGLAND FANS TO BE OPTIMISTIC AHEAD OF WORLD TWENTY20 FINAL

ENGLAND will meet the West Indies, the only side to have beaten them in the tournament, in tomorrow's World Twenty20 final at Eden Gardens.

Here we look at four reasons to be optimistic about a reversal.

1. DEEPEST BATTING IN TOURNAMENT

Debates can be had over who the best T20 batsman in the world is, who hits the longest ball, and who has the widest array of shots. But for sheer depth, England appear to have brought the strongest pound-for-pound line-up to the party.

All 11 of the side who played the semi-final against New Zealand can be considered batsmen or all-rounders, with not a bunny in sight.

David Willey, Adil Rashid and Liam Plunkett represent as talented a bottom three as there is.

Should wickets tumble in a hurry in the final, England have plans A, B and C.

2. RASHID AND HALES ARE DUE

It may seem like a classic case of gambler's fallacy – expecting a sequence to break simply because it's about time – but two of England's most dangerous performers are yet to really fire.

Rashid's leg-spin was a star attraction in this year's Big Bash but has yet to pull up trees in India, while Hales is a former world number one in the format and remains the country's only T20 centurion.

If either, or both, catch fire in Kolkata, it could have a big bearing on the result.

3. BACKROOM BOYS BRING WINNING MENTALITY

Much has been made of the inexperience in England's side but that is compensated by some serious know-how in the dugout.

Assistant coach Paul Farbrace led Sri Lanka to the title in 2014, bowling coach Ottis Gibson was in charge of the West Indies when they won in 2012 and batting consultant Paul Collingwood captained England to their win in 2010.

Add in the glittering CV of head coach Trevor Bayliss, and the well of wisdom runs deep.

4. JORDAN AND STOKES: DEADLY AT THE DEATH

One of England's failings in limited-overs cricket in previous incarnations was the inability to keep a lid on opposition batsmen at the end of an innings.

But Chris Jordan and Ben Stokes have made the final overs their stage of late. The pair go full and fast, occasionally aiming at fifth stump, and have enjoyed considerable success so far.

The Windies scored freely against England when they met in Mumbai but will not have missed the pair's strong showings since.

Record makers who

from page 25

venue. Playing for Yorkshire in June 2004, the Australia scored 243 out of a team total of 395.

● Here is a list of all the other Ageas Bowl Championship double centurions:

240 - James Vince Hampshire v Essex, 2014
237* - Sean Ervine Hampshire v Somerset, 2010
237 - Neil McKenzie Hampshire v Yorkshire, 2011
231 - Jimmy Adams Hampshire v Leicestershire, 2014
227 - Marcus Trescothick Somerset v Hampshire, 2011
222 - Will Jefferson Essex v Hampshire, 2004
222* - Joe Root Yorkshire v Hampshire, 2012
221 - Richard Keogh Northamptonshire v Hampshire, 2013
219* - Jimmy Adams Hampshire v Worcestershire, 2013
218 - Jimmy Adams Hampshire v Northamptonshire, 2013
204 - Michael Carberry Hampshire v Warwickshire, 2009
203* - Shane Watson Hampshire v Warwickshire, 2005
202* - Younis Khan Yorkshire v Hampshire, 2007

Best bowling figures

Two Hampshire players have taken eight wickets in a Championship innings at the Ageas Bowl.

Best is David Balcombe, who claimed 8-71 against Gloucestershire in April 2012. Balcombe also took three wickets in the second innings, but Hampshire still lost by 33 runs.

Alan Mullally took 8-90 against Warwickshire at the Ageas Bowl in August 2001.

The match was ruined by rain and ended in a draw.

There have been nine instances of a bowler taking seven wickets in a Championship innings.

7-28 Kyle Hogg Lancashire v Hampshire, 2011
7-64 Mushtaq Ahmed Sussex v Hampshire, 2006
7-66 Shane Bond Hampshire v Sussex, 2008
7-68 Samit Patel Nottinghamshire v Hampshire, 2011
7-82 Stuart Clark Hampshire v Lancashire, 2007
7-99 Shane Warne Hampshire v Middlesex, 2006
7-107 Adil Rashid Yorkshire v Hampshire, 2008
7-140 Imran Tahir Hampshire v Somerset, 2009
7-150 Alex Riley Kent v Hampshire, 2013

Highest List A innings

Gloucestershire posted the highest List A team total at the Ageas Bowl in May 2008.

They rattled up 350-5 in a 50-over Friends Provident Trophy tie with Alex Gidman leading the way with 105. Marcus North (85), Hamish Marshall (64) and Chris Taylor (53) also made hay.

Despite that, Hampshire still ran out winners – on the



Duckworth/Lewis Method!

Liam Dawson played a starring role in the match where Hampshire scored their highest List A team total at the Ageas Bowl.

First off, he scored an unbeaten 73 as Hampshire posted 343-4 in 50 overs against Sussex in last year's Royal London Cup tie. Dawson then claimed 6-47 as Hampshire won by 87 runs.

The highest 50-over team total ever recorded at the Ageas Bowl remains New Zealand's 359-3 total against England in June 2013.

That was the day Martin Guptill's unbeaten 189 remains the highest one-day score at the Ageas Bowl.

The highest by a Hampshire player is the 167 not

cluding 19 fours and two sixes.

Lowest one-day innings

The United States of America were dismissed for the lowest team total in Ageas Bowl one-day history.

Playing an ICC Champions Trophy tie against Australia in September 2004, the Americans were skittled for 65. Mark Kasprowicz (4-14) and Jason Gillespie (4-15) were the chief destroyers.

One-day centurions

Martin Guptill's unbeaten 189 remains the highest one-day score at the Ageas Bowl.

The highest by a Hampshire

out Sean Ervine hammered against Ireland in a Friends Provident Trophy tie in May 2009. Ervine and Michael Carberry (121 not out) shared an unbroken third-wicket stand of 260 as Hampshire piled up 316-2 in 50 overs.

Chris Benham holds the venue record for the highest innings in a 40-over match. He smashed 158 when Hampshire thrashed Glamorgan by 114 runs in September 2006 to win promotion to the top tier of the one-day league.

Major one-day hundreds at the Ageas Bowl

189* MJ Guptill New Zealand v England, 2013

167* SM Ervine Hampshire v Ireland, 2009
158 CC Benham Hampshire v Glamorgan, 2006

150 HM Amla South Africa v England, 2012
150* MA Carberry Hampshire v Lancashire, 2013

148* MA Carberry Hampshire v Scotland, 2012
143 SR Watson Australia v England, 2013

136 SM Ervine Hampshire v Leicestershire, 2011
131 JM Vince Hampshire v Scotland, 2011

126* IR Bell England v India, 2007
126 IR Bell England v West Indies, 2012

125 MM Ali Worcestershire v Hampshire, 2009
122 CC Benham Hampshire v West Indies A, 2006

121* MA Carberry Hampshire v Ireland, 2009
121 NJ O'Brien Northamptonshire v Hampshire, 2011

HAMPSHIRE CRICKET 2015



put stamp on venue



120* DA Kenway Hampshire v
Zimbabweans, 2003

Best one-day bowling

Two Hampshire players have taken six wickets in a one-day innings at the Ageas Bowl.

Best figures remain Stuart Clark's 6-27 against Surrey in the Friends Provident Trophy in May 2007.

Liam Dawson's 6-46 haul against Sussex last July was the second occasion.

Five-wicket hauls:
5-19 J Lewis Gloucestershire v Hampshire, 2005
5-27 AD Mascarenhas Hampshire v Gloucestershire, 2002
5-27 Imran Tahir Hampshire v Sussex, 2008

5-29 M Dillon West Indies v Bangladesh, 2004
5-33 AU Rashid Yorkshire v Hampshire, 2014

5-35 GJ Batty Worcestershire v Hampshire, 2009
5-38 Azharullah Northamptonshire v Hampshire, 2014
5-61 BA Stokes England v Australia, 2013

Highest T20 team totals
Australia hold the Ageas Bowl record for the highest T20 team total with a huge 248-6 total against England in August 2013.

Aaron Finch was the mainstay of the Aussies' total, hitting 14 sixes in a wonderful 156 off just 63 deliveries.
● The highest county T20 score remains Hampshire's

225-2 total against Middlesex in June 2006.

MA Carberry (90 off 59 balls) and Mitchell Stokes (62 off 39 balls) put on 122 for the first wicket that night.

Other scores of 200 plus:
219-2 Hampshire v Essex, 2009
210-6 Middlesex v Hampshire, 2005
209-6 England v Australia, 2013
205-5 Hampshire v Gloucestershire, 2010
203-5 Sussex v Hampshire, 2012
202-3 Hampshire v Lancashire, 2013
201-2 Hampshire v Surrey, 2010
201-4 Lancashire v Hampshire, 2013

Lowest T20 team totals
Kent's 72 all out in June 2011 is by some distance the lowest T20 team total at the Ageas Bowl.

The first three in the Kent order – Joe Denly, skipper Rob Key and Azhar Mahmood – were all out without scoring as the visitors slipped to 2-3 chasing 142 for victory.

Dimi Mascarenhas ended with 3-29 while Imran Tahir took 2-12.

● Hampshire's lowest all out total is their 85 against Sussex in June 2008.

The county reached 38-0, before plummeting to 43-5 with Michael Carberry, Chris Benham and Sean Ervine all out without scoring.

Highest T20 individual innings

Aaron Finch boasts the highest of the six T20 hundreds scored at the Ageas Bowl with his mighty 156 against England three years ago.

The highest score in a county game remains the 124 not out Michael Lumb compiled against Essex in June 2009 – still the highest individual T20 innings for the county.

Other hundreds:
116* LJ Wright Sussex v Hampshire, 2014

101* JHK Adams Hampshire v Surrey, 2010
100* JHK Adams Hampshire v Glamorgan, 2010
100* MA Carberry Hampshire v Lancashire, 2013

Final will not be normal tie says Morgan

ENGLAND captain Eoin Morgan has called on his side to embrace the occasion of the World Twenty20 final, stressing it will be no "normal match".

The atmosphere at Eden Gardens is unlikely to hit the fever pitch it would have had hosts India been involved, but 66,000 cricket mad fans will still pour in to Kolkata's famous arena and most will be cheering on the West Indies.

That represents a huge stage for a callow but fearless England squad, 12 of whom arrived with fewer than 15 caps to their name, while three key men – Ben Stokes, Jason Roy and David Willey – had never played at an international tournament before.

And Morgan is not hiding from the magnitude of the moment at hand. "We're quite real about things, we know it's not going to be a normal game," he said.

"Even the semi-final we played against New Zealand, there was quite a lot of hype around the expectation of playing in a final, and I want all of our players to embrace it."

"Winning would mean a huge amount. I think given the strides that we've made in the last 12 months in white-ball cricket, this would be a great reward for the mindset we've shown, the dedication and the hard work."

The showpiece represents a rematch from the Super 10 stage, a game won by the West Indies as Chris Gayle reeled off 11 sixes in an unbeaten century.

England have fielded an unchanged XI for the last three matches and are strongly expected to stick with their winning formula, with everyone fit and available despite a small bout of illness in the camp.

There remains the intriguing, if remote, possibility of Hampshire's Liam Dawson making his England debut in the final but conditions do not appear to favour a third specialist spinner.

Morgan insisted England would be brave enough to throw the left-arm in if that changes but that seems a gamble too far, even for this group of risk-takers.

"We'd have no issue giving him his debut if that was the right way to go about it, absolutely," he said.

"Since he's been out here he's come on a hell of a lot. The pitch is under cover at the moment and it all depends if any grass has come off."

"Even if there was no grass, I'd still have a lot of belief in the side that we can go out and put in a match-winning performance."

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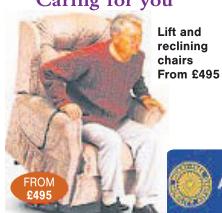
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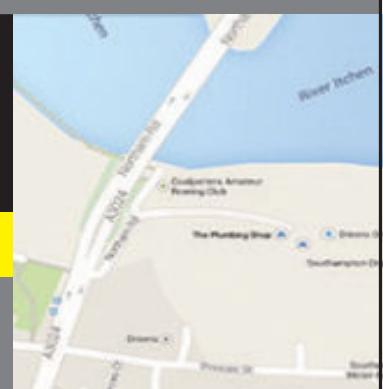
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Brazil facing 2018 World Cup struggle

FIVE time world champions Brazil face an uphill struggle to even qualify for the 2018 World Cup in Russia.

They needed a last-gasp Dani Alves goal to rescue a 2-2 draw against Paraguay in midweek and currently lie outside the qualification places.

Here, the Sports Pink takes a look at what is going wrong:

1. Neymar: The Brazilian press have rounded on the country's poster boy, who is not replicating his Barcelona form on the international stage.

The striker has collected more cards than goals for Brazil since Dunga took over.

A booking against Uruguay saw him miss the Paraguay match through suspension, and subsequent pictures of him out on the town did not go down well.

2. Squad strength: Neymar's suspension meant Dunga turned to 35-year-old striker Ricardo Oliveira, while calling up untried Santos teenager Gabriel Barbosa.

Defender David Luiz was also banned against Paraguay and, while he has his critics, the former Chelsea man's absence left a distinct lack of balance in the back four.



Neymar, right, with Barcelona colleague Luis Suarez.

3. Defence: There is no real problem in the goalscoring department, with Brazil hitting 11 in six games. But at the back things do not look so clever. Of the teams battling for qualification, only Chile have let in more, with Brazil leaking eight goals.

4. Dunga: The World Cup-winning player returned for a second spell in charge after the 2014 World Cup. Despite picking up the pieces following the 7-1 semi-final humiliation by Germany, Dunga has not been immune from criticism and their limp display for the majority of the Paraguay match will only have added fuel to the fire.

However, while Dunga must shoulder the blame for that, he did freshen up Brazil's attack with the introduction of Hulk and Lucas Lima as substitutes.

5. Reasons to be cheerful? It is still tight at the top. While a defeat in Paraguay would have left Brazil in seventh place, a victory would have lifted them to third, above Argentina on goal difference and within two points of joint leaders Uruguay and Ecuador.

As it is, they lie outside the qualification spots in sixth. But with 12 games left there is plenty of time to make up ground.

This is the team that

SAINTS take on title chasing Leicester on Sunday and will come up against a team largely built by one their own former managers.

Nigel Pearson's second spell in charge of the Foxes lasted from November 2011 through to June 2015, before he was sacked and replaced by Claudio Ranieri, writes ADAM LEITCH.

Pearson's side started to build momentum at the end of last season, as they put together a remarkable run to avoid relegation from the Premier League.

This season it has gone a stage further still, with Ranieri harnessing the players to lead them to the brink of history.

Going into this weekend's round of games, Leicester were five points clear of second placed Tottenham with just seven games to play - starting with facing Saints on Sunday.

While Ranieri has understandably taken many of the plaudits, Pearson built the side.

Of the 16 players who have made ten or more Premier League appearances for the club this season, Pearson was responsible for signing 11 of them.

Marc Albrighton

The midfielder made his name at Aston Villa, after rising through their youth ranks to make his first team debut in 2009.

He notched up 86 appearances for Villa, scoring seven goals, but found he was getting increasingly less game time.

Thrived

He had a brief loan spell at Wigan in 2013 and was released when his contract expired in 2014.

Pearson moved to bring him in on a free and he has thrived ever since, playing in all 31 games this season.

Danny Drinkwater

The former Manchester United youngster never managed to make a first team appearance at the Red Devils, instead gaining experience in a variety of loan spells.

Drinkwater had stints with the likes of Huddersfield, Cardiff, Watford and Barnsley, before Pearson took a chance and brought in the midfielder in 2012.

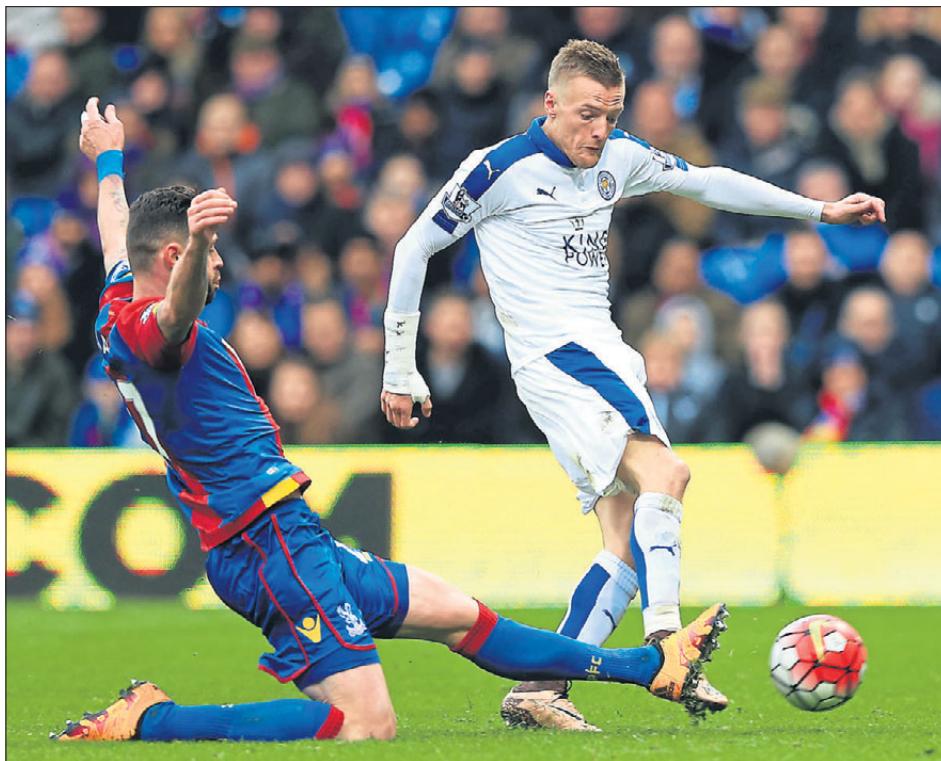
He was a key member of the Leicester side who won promotion to the Premier League, and has improved ever since.

His form this season, which has seen him play in 29 games, scoring twice, has seen him win a first England call-up.

Christian Fuchs

Austrian international defender Fuchs was spotted playing for German club Schalke and signed on a free transfer just a few weeks before Pearson was sacked.

As such Pearson never managed the 28-year-old, who has 72 international caps to his name having



Jamie Vardy, right, has been the story of the 2015/16 Premier League season.



Danny Drinkwater (centre) in action on his England international debut against the Netherlands on Tuesday.

established himself in his native Austria early in his career.

Fuchs has 25 appearances to his name this term.

Robert Huth

His time working with Pearson was fairly brief, but influential enough to get the centre half a permanent move to Leicester.

Huth was very well known to the Premier League for his spells with

Chelsea, Middlesbrough and Stoke, for whom he made a combined total of nearly 200 appearances.

He was allowed to join Leicester on loan for the second half of their survival campaign, and played a crucial role.

Pearson said he would like to make the move permanent, which happened just days before he was sacked.

He has been a rock for Ranieri,

starting 30 games and chipping in with three goals.

Riyad Mahrez

The signing of Mahrez has been hailed as one of the best pieces of business in the Premier League in recent years.

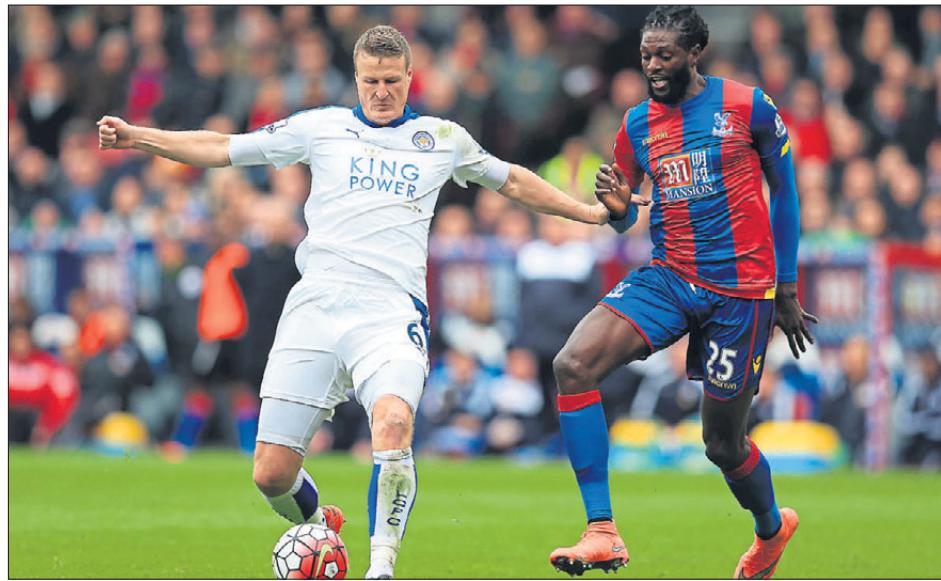
Up until he signed a three-and-a-half-year deal to move to the Foxes in January 2014, the Algerian international had played his football in

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ex-Saint Nigel built ...



Leicester City's Riyad Mahrez poses for a selfie. The Algerian has been one of the stand-out performers in the top flight in 2015/16.



Robert Huth, left, has been a regular for the Foxes this term.

the lower leagues of France, where he had never been a prolific goalscorer.

He made a bright start under Pearson, scoring seven goals in 51 appearances in the promotion winning and relegation survival campaigns.

However, he has really flourished under Ranieri, bagging 16 goals in 30 matches.

Wes Morgan

The commanding centre half was already somewhat of a legend at Nottingham Forest when he moved to Leicester in January 2012 as one of Pearson's first signings.

Though only 28-year-old at the time of the £1m switch, he had made more than 400 appearances for Forest after coming through the youth team.

Morgan has started all 31 games

this season.

Shinji Okazaki

Could only scarcely be described as a Pearson signing, arriving as he did just four days before his sacking was announced.

However, the Japanese international's £7m fee has looked a bargain based on his energetic midfield displays.

Okazaki started his career in

Japan, but moved to Germany for spells with Stuttgart and Mainz.

That he was already used to fairly physical football has helped Okazaki to make such a seamless transition to the Premier League with 29 appearances and five goals this season.

Danny Simpson

Simpson was well travelled by the time he arrived at Leicester.

He came through the youth ranks at Manchester United but only made a handful of appearances for the Red Devils, instead spending most of his time out on loan at the likes of Royal Antwerp, Sunderland, Ipswich, Blackburn and Newcastle, who eventually signed him permanently.

The right back went on to have a season with QPR before Pearson snapped him up in 2014.

He has played 23 times in this campaign.

Club record

Leonardo Ulloa

The Argentinian striker did the rounds in Spain before moving to England with Brighton.

His scoring record caught the eye of Pearson, who splashed out a club record £8m on him.

Ulloa has enjoyed reasonable success with the Foxes, but hasn't been prolific.

After 13 goals in 40 appearances in all competitions in his first season, he has been used mainly as a sub by Ranieri in the top flight, starting just five games but coming off the bench 18 times, scoring three goals.

Fairytales

Jamie Vardy

The fairytale story of the Leiceseter team.

Pearson took a huge gamble, spending £1m to take Vardy from non-league football with Fleetwood Town in 2012.

It looks like an inspired move now, given everything that Vardy has gone on to achieve.

In Leicester's Championship promotion season he scored 16 times, but took a while to get going in the top flight, scoring five goals in a great finish to the campaign.

However, this season has been a different story, with an astonishing 19 goals in 31 games.

Ritchie de Laet

Joined Leicester in 2012 and was part of the successful side that rose to the Premier League and retained their top flight status.

However, after starting this season in the side, playing 12 times and scoring one goal, he fell out of favour and has been loaned to Middlesbrough.

The rest: Nathan Dyer, N'Golo Kante, Andy King, Jeffrey Schlupp, Kasper Schmeichel

Another Toon crisis!

NEWCASTLE boss Rafael Benitez is facing a goalkeeping crisis as he attempts to drag the club out of Premier League relegation trouble after Rob Elliot suffered a serious knee injury.

With number one Tim Krul already out for the season, Elliot's misfortune on international duty with the Republic of Ireland left Benitez with only Karl Darlow and teenager Freddie Woodman.

It is not the first time in the club's recent history that a manager has had to cope with problems in the goalkeeping department.

Here, the Sports Pink takes a look back at some troubled times.

JOHN KARELSE AND TOMMY WRIGHT

With Harper, then first-choice, and Shay Given both injured at the start of the 1999-2000 season, Ruud Gullit turned to £900,000 compatriot John Karelse, who let in four on debut at Saints and three at home to Wimbledon the following weekend. Karelse, who was to make just one more appearance for the club.

PAVEL SRNICEK

With Given once again injured, the then 38-year-old Srnicek re-joined the Magpies on a short-term contract as



Rob Elliot is out for the rest of the season with injury.

back-up to Harper, who promptly swapped places with the Republic of Ireland international in the treatment room. Srnicek's big moment came as a late sub for Given in a 3-1 league victory over Tottenham two days before Christmas 2006, and he then started in a 2-1 Boxing Day defeat at Bolton.

JAK ALNWICK

With Krul and Elliot sidelined by ankle and thigh injuries respectively, then manager Alan Pardew turned to 21-year-old Alnwicks, initially to good effect as he came off the bench to help secure a 2-1 league win over Chelsea. However, the youngster was to concede eight goals in his next two appearances as the Magpies slipped to four successive defeats, with then 17-year-old Woodman providing the back-up.

PETER BEARDSLEY

Beardsley was the THIRD man to wear the gloves after specialist keeper Martin Thomas had initially been replaced by Ian Stewart in an 8-1 defeat at West Ham in April 1986. Hammers defender Alvin Martin scored a unique hat-trick, one goal against each of the three.

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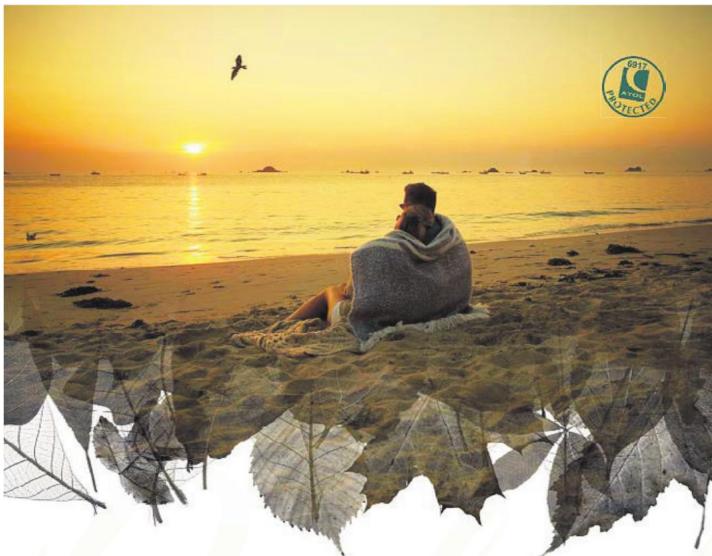
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Bassett - PM
St Michaels & All Angels Church,
Bassett Ave,
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Aimee 07786 245199

Coxford - PM
Shirley Warren Action Church,
107-117 Warren Crescent,
5.30 & 7.30pm.
Catherine 07737 001413

Regents Park - PM
Regents Park Community College,
King Edwards Avenue,
5.30pm & 7.30pm
Tricia 07767 373471

Romsey - PM
The Abbey Hall,
The Abbey,
5.30 & 7.30pm
Lynn 07971 354179

Sholing - AM & PM
St Andrews Methodist Church,
South East Road,
9.30am or 5.30 & 7.30pm
Hayley 07772 351717

Woolston - PM
St Patricks Parish Centre,
Porchester Road,
5.30 & 7.30pm
Vanessa 07746 533898

Tuesday's

Bitterne - AM
Catholic Church Hall,
Commercial Street,
9.30 & 11.30am
Jo 07733 235039

Bitterne - PM
Catholic Church Hall,
Commercial Street,
3.30, 5.30 & 7.30pm
Jo 07733 235039

Botley - AM
Botley Centre,
High Street,
9.15 & 11.15am
Viv 07899 736132

Bursledon - PM
Pilands Wood Community Centre,
Chamberlayne Road,
7.30pm

Freemantle - PM
Shirley Baptist Church,
Crown Street, 5.30pm
Lauren 07708 601786

Hedge End - PM
St Johns Church,
Underhill Centre, St Johns Road,
3.30, 5.30 & 7.30pm
Claire 02380 407551

Lordswood - PM
Lordswood Community Centre,
Sandpiper Road,
6.30pm
Caroline 07540 752062

Millbrook - PM
Colne Ave Baptist Church,
Colne Ave, 5.30 & 7.30pm
Krystal 07576 052709

Netley Abbey - PM
Abbey Hall, Victoria Road,
5.30 & 7.30pm
Claire 07917 851640

Shirley - AM
Salvation Army Hall,
Victor Street,
9.30 & 11.30am
Lauren 07708 601786

Swaythling - PM
Swaythling Methodist Church,
286 Building, Burgess Rd,
5.30 & 7.30pm

West End - PM
Hildene Community Centre,
68 High Street,
3pm, 5.30pm & 7.30pm
Kay 07833 746532

Wednesday's

Bitterne Park - PM
Bitterne Park Social Club
Manor Farm Road, 5.30 & 7.30pm
Laura 07825 210006

Hamble - PM
Hamble Village Memorial Hall (Hall at rear),
4 High Street,
5.30 & 7.30pm
Viv 07899 736132

Lordshill - PM
Lordshill Church,
Lordshill District Centre,
5.30 & 7.30pm
Lynn 07971 354179

Millbrook - PM
All Saints Church,
Kendal Avenue,
7pm. Lit 07955 898323

Peartree Green - AM
Peartree Church Hall,
Peartree Road,
9.30 & 11.30am
Claire 07917 851640

Sholing - PM
St Monica Junior School,
St Monica Road,
5.30 & 7.30pm
Maria 07500 714708

Southampton City Centre - PM
Greek Orthodox Church Hall
102 Bernard Street, SO14 3EH
7.30pm

Upper Shirley - AM & PM
Isaac Watts Memorial Church,
Winchester Rd,
9.30 & 11.30am or 5.30 & 7.30pm

Woodley - PM
Woodley Village Hall,
School Road,
5.30 & 7.30pm
Charlotte 07810 643419

Thursday's

Chartwell - PM
Townhill Park Community Centre,
Meggeson Avenue,
5.30pm & 7.30pm
Kay 07833 746532

Hedge End - AM & PM
KCC (Kings Community Church),
Sovereign Place,
Upper Northam Rd,
9.30 & 11.30am
3.30, 5.30 & 7.30pm
Claire 02380 407551

Highfield - PM
Highfield House Hotel,
Highfield Lane,
6 & 7.45pm
Jane 07912 374338

North Badsey - PM
The Village Hall,
Botley Road,
5.30 & 7.30pm
Charlotte 07810 643419

Redbridge - PM
Redbridge Community School,
Cuckmere Lane, 7.30pm
Teresa 07940 184092

Rowhams & Nursling
Romsey Golf Club
Romsey Road
7:30pm. Aimee 07786 245199

Southampton City Centre - AM
Greek Orthodox Church Hall
102 Bernard Street, SO14 3EH
9.30am

Thornhill Park - PM
Thornhill Baptist Church,
Thornhill Park Road,
5.30 & 7.30pm
Amanda 07941 151211

Upper Shirley - PM
Atherley Bowling Club,
Hill Lane, 5.30 & 7.30pm
Julie 07949 256891

Weston - AM & PM
Chamberlayne Leisure Centre,
Weston Lane,
9.30 & 11.30am
3.30, 5.30 & 7.30pm
Hayley 07545 772258

Friday's

Upper Shirley - AM
Atherley Bowling Club,
Hill Lane, 9.30am
Julie 07949 256891

Woolston - AM
St Patricks Parish Centre,
Porchester Road, 9am
Vanessa 07746 533898

Saturday's
St Denys - AM
St Denys Community Centre,
Priory Road, 9am
Viv 07899 736132

Women's and girls football spotlight



Southampton Saints Ladies. Pictured: Hannah Haughton (GK), Sabrina Morris Manoslava, Kerri Why, Aliss Wheeler, Rebecca Davis, Aimee Burridge, Carla Mitchell, Kat Littleboy, Leah Shave, Georgie Hoban, Emily Hardaker, Amelia Southgate, Carla Perkins, Emily Slater, Becky Bath, Liberty Pritchard, Emma Whitlock, Jess Lewry, Krystal Whyte (c), Catherine Browning, Rachel Anderson. Pic by Tara Shave.

Skipper Krystal strikes to give Saints an away win

KRYSTAL Whyte scored the only goal as Southampton Saints Ladies won at Cheltenham Town in the FA Women's Premier League SW Division 1.

In a goalless first half, the only moment of real note was a wonder save from Cheltenham's Bec Panthers.

At the other end, good goalkeeping by Hannah Haughton kept the hosts, who were playing with the wind behind them, at bay.

It was against the run of play that Whyte broke the deadlock.

Cheltenham forced a barrage of corners, but Saints held out well.

Southampton manager Adam Lee said "I was very pleased how we dug in, travelling with the bare eleven."

Saints have now won two of their last three games and have one game left - ironically also against Cheltenham at Sholing's Silverlake Arena on April 24.

● In the Southern Region women's second tier, Southampton Women FC defeated Team Solent 5-0 helped by a Bell-Jack treble. Southampton remain second, three points adrift of Chesham but with two games in hand.

There were wins in Division 1 of the Hampshire League for Winchester Reserves and Rushmoor against Widbrook and AFC Stoneham respectively. Charlie Snelling bagged a brace for the Flyers.

In the second tier, Burseldon La-



Saints' match-winner at Cheltenham, Krystal White.

dies grabbed a rare win over Widbrook Ladies Reserves.

Bournemouth Sports ensured QK Southampton remain rooted to the foot of the table with a 2-1 victory.

In the Winchester and District Girls U15 League, St Francis lost 4-1 to Pompey University, Molly Lowe replying. Southampton Saints U14s

were awarded the points against Widbrook, who failed to raise a team.

In the U12 Winchester Girls League, Tia Gelder scored her 14th goal from 16 starts as second-placed Winchester Flyers won 1-0 at Petersfield.

Winchester Flyers Reds U11s also

had a good day as they extended their lead in the top spot with a good win over Worthies. Shania Moore netted as Widbrook defeated St Francis U11s.

The only declared result of the U10 division was a home walkover awarded to Petersfield against Southampton Saints.

United close to clinching title after triumph

CAMERON Roach netted five times as Portswood United Reserves annihilated Sporting Compass 9-1 to put them on the brink of the Southampton Sunday Junior Division Five title.

Seven of United's strikes came in a goal-ridden second half, but it may have been more had there not been a pause in play in the first period due to a barrage of hailstones.

Portswood found their rhythm after the weather stoppage as Jerome O'Brien and David Gough before Braiden Hamilton chipped in with a brace of his own.

Hamilton, the former Brockenhurst striker, could have had his hat-trick, but he missed a penalty. Sam Wilson netted a consolation.

In the only other match in Junior Five, AFC Spitfire, who have played just seven of their 14 league games after a postponement-addled winter, leapfrogged opponents Bridge Manor into third place with a 4-0 victory.

Dawid Wrezel struck twice with Neil Philpotts and Daniel Noon also on target.

Sports defeat table-toppers

IN JUNIOR Six, Winsor Sports defeated Junior Six table-toppers Nursling in a massive title showdown.

Sports moved to within three points of the table-toppers with two games in hand as Spencer Haysom and Brett Withey found the net.

Meanwhile, in Junior One, Matt Watson struck five times as CDA moved from fifth to third with a 9-3 trouncing of Bishops.

Sam Horton joined Watson in the goal glut with Mark Barton and Gareth Peck netting one apiece. Kev Stone (2) and Lloyd Glissing replied.

Kyle nets four in thrashing

IN JUNIOR Two, David Kyle netted four goals as Eastpoint staked their claim for second place with a 7-2 thrashing of current incumbents AFC Southbrook.

Andrew Catterson, David Moore and James Erskine joined the party with a goal apiece as Eastpoint moved to within six points of Southbrook with three games in hand.

Dion Bone and Anthony Gardener replied for Southbrook, who have now completed their season.

Home second after 3-1 win

FOREST Home defeated Otter Sunday 3-1 to maintain their second place in Junior Four as Freddy Atterbury's double and Adam Ashford saw Home win it after the break.

An own goal had made it 1-1 at half-time. Meanwhile, Hedge End City and Portswood United shared a 4-4 draw.

Strugglers Hedge were 4-2 up at the break as Ryan Dennis, Ryan Fountain, Brad Isaacs and Dan Brooks netted.

But Portswood hit back as Aaron Blaxall and Jimi John's brace apiece saw the team share the spoils.

In the other game in the fifth tier, Lyndhurst JFC scraped past third-placed Hunters Inn 4-3.

Jack Stickland, Ben Hatch, Kane Coundley and Mike Huggett were on target for the New Forest outfit. Henry Rule (two) and Ben Pearce responded.

Hampshire Colleges spotlight

Itchen's love affair goes on with another cup final day out

ITCHEN girls' love affair with the English Colleges Women's Cup goes on and on – and into a fourth successive final!

A 4-3 win over Long Road College in Cambridge has put the Itchen lasses in with a great chance of further success and they'll be favourites to lift the trophy again next month.

That's because their cup final opponents will once again be Wkye College, from Hull – the side they wiped the floor with in a most one-sided final at Walsall's Bescot Stadium.

Itchen won 8-2 that day and had they won by twice the margin, the scoreline wouldn't have flattered them!

Two goals apiece from strike partners Beth Norman and Payton

Howard were enough to send Itchen through to their fourth consecutive national final.

But the cup holders had to dig deep against Cambridge-based Long Road College, who carried a threat of their own with some talented and physically strong individuals.

Itchen started strongly, in spite of the long minibus journey, and within 15 minutes Payton Howard had struck.

Punched holes

Her 20-yard drive smacked against the underside of the crossbar and into the net, giving the Long Road goalkeeper no chance.

Itchen missed further chances to

extend their lead as the pacey strike pairing repeatedly punched holes in the hosts' defences.

Against the run of play, Long Road responded and took an unlikely lead with two clinical counter-attacks.

They held their 2-1 lead until half time, but Itchen completely dominated the second half and quickly restored their advantage.

The equalising goal - and Norman's second - owed much to some excellent advantage play by the referee.

The Itchen striker sidestepped two challenges before being tripped inside the box.

The official was poised to award a penalty, but played on to allow Howard to pick herself up and pass the ball

into an empty net to make it 2-2.

The pace and industry of Beth Norman was causing the Long Road all sorts of problems, and the striker was rewarded with two goals of her own to book Itchen a place in the national English Colleges' FA final.

Their 4-2 advantage was trimmed with the Light Blues scoring a third goal with the very last kick of the game, but Itchen returned home with a victory which was ultimately more comfortable than the 4-3 scoreline suggests.

Wkye, who are probably still having nightmares about last season's Millie Farrow dominated final, won 4-0 at Scarborough to give Itchen something to contemplate in the coming weeks.

BARTON SPOT ON!



Action from Barton Peveril's 3rd XI Cup final success.

BARTON PEVERIL WON A MARATHON PENALTY SHOT OUT TO WIN THE HAMPSHIRE COLLEGES THIRD XI CUP AT ITCHEN'S EXPENSE.

They won 10-9 on spot kicks after the final itself at Test Park had ended all square 1-1 after extra-time.

Ironically, it was a first half penalty, converted by Harry Osman, which gave Itchen the advantage.

But five minutes into the second half, Sam Emirali (from an assist by Jack Martin) squared it up and

sent the tie into what proved a barren extra-time period in terms of goals.

Both teams were almost out on their legs when the penalty shoot-out began.

The first eight penalties were all scored.

Itchen goalkeeper Ryan Ung came to the party as Barton promptly fluffed their next three spot kicks, swinging the shoot-out in his side's favour.

But then BP hero Jordan Couper pulled off three saves of his own.

The next two penalties from

both sides were converted before Couper stepped up to fire Barton Peveril ahead.

He then went back between his posts and saved the tenth Itchen penalty from Will Cooke.

● The century-old Hampshire Colleges sixes tournament, believed to be the oldest surviving short format competition of its type in the country, has found as new home.

When the college teams face up on Wednesday week, April 13, the venue will be the Garrison Ground at Bar End, Winchester,

as opposed to the Southampton Sports Centre, where it has been held since the war.

● Wyvern's year ten footballers are through to the Hampshire Schools FA Under-15 Cup final and will play Portchester at Aldershot Town on May 4.

They have beaten Fareham Academy 5-2, All Hallows 2-1, St George's 7-3 and Priestlands 2-0 to reach the final.

St George's RC College also feature at Aldershot that evening – against Wavell in the Year 7 Cup final.

Hamilton races ahead with record

LEWIS Hamilton broke the lap record in Bahrain to secure pole position for Sunday's race ahead of his Mercedes teammate Nico Rosberg.

The world champion posted a blistering time of one minute and 29.493 seconds under the lights to finish the session marginally faster than Rosberg with Sebastian Vettel in third.

But the new qualifying format, which had been condemned to the Formula One scrapheap only to be resurrected for the Bahrain race, courted criticism once more.

FIA president Jean Todt, Bernie

Ecclestone, the sport's chief executive, and the team bosses will be holding a summit meeting ahead of Sunday's race to determine what to do for the next race in China, a fortnight's time.

Hamilton made a mistake on his first flying run in the final phase of qualifying to hand the initiative to Rosberg.

However the 31-year-old Briton returned for a second run with a lap that will send out a warning to Rosberg – who won the opening race in Australia – and to Vettel, too.

Despite Ferrari hoping that this power-reliant track would suit them rather more

than Melbourne's Albert Park street circuit, Vettel was more than half-a-second slower than Lewis Hamilton.

His teammate Kimi Raikkonen was even further back and will start from fourth.

While Q3, the shoot-out for pole, provided greater entertainment than the season opener, the grid was already determined with three minutes of the session remaining, therefore making the new countdown clock somewhat irrelevant.

It seems unlikely that the sport can continue with this seemingly-doomed format for much longer.



Lewis Hamilton

FOOTBALL FIXTURES

Monday, April 4
VANARAMA NATIONAL LEAGUE SOUTH
Wealdstone v Hemel Hempstead.
EVO-STIK SOUTHERN LEAGUE
Premier Division: Redditch v Dunstable.
SYDENHAMS WESSEX LEAGUE
SWL Cup, semi-final: Newport IoW v Brockenhurst (Sholing FC, 7.30).
Premier Division: Blackfield & Langley v Horndean.

PUMA ENGINEERING HAMPSHIRE PREMIER LEAGUE
Premier Division: Infinity v Hedge End Rangers (6.15), Otterbourne v Bush Hill (6.15).

Tuesday, April 5
VANARAMA NATIONAL LEAGUE
Aldershot v Grimsby, Altrincham v Dover, Barrow v Braintree, FC Halifax v Boreham Wood, Torquay v Chester.

VANARAMA NATIONAL LEAGUE SOUTH
Havant & Waterlooville v Chelmsford, Maidenhead v Whitehawk, Maidstone v Sutton, Truro v Dartford, Weston-super-Mare v Basingstoke.
EVO-STIK SOUTHERN LEAGUE

Premier Division: Biggleswade v Bideford, Paulton Rovers v Poole Town (7.30), Weymouth v Leamington. Division One South & West: Bishops Cleeve v Swindon Supermarine, Cinderford v Winchester City, Shortwood v AFC Totton, Tiverton v Taunton (7.30).

SYDENHAMS WESSEX LEAGUE
SWL Cup, semi-final: Team Solent v Portland Utd (New Milton Town FC).
Premier Division: Andover Town v Folland Sports, Fareham Town v Lymington Town, Hamworthy Utd v Bemerton HH, Moneymeades v Sholing, Salisbury v AFC Portchester.

Division One: Pewsey Vale v Amesbury, Romsey v Ringwood, US Portsmouth v Hythe & Dibden.

ALDERSHOT SENIOR CUP
Alresford v Farnham Town.

Wednesday, April 6
EVO-STIK SOUTHERN LEAGUE

Premier Division: Frome v Chesham.

SYDENHAMS WESSEX LEAGUE
Premier Division: Verwood v Horndean, Whitchurch v Bournemouth Poppies.

Division One: Christchurch v Tadley Calleva, Fleet Spurs v Laverstock & Ford.

ISLE OF WIGHT GOLD CUP
Cowes Sports v East Cowes Sports.

PUMA ENGINEERING HAMPSHIRE PREMIER LEAGUE

Premier Division: Baffins MR v Fleetlands (6.15), Liphook v Clanfield (6.15), Liss Athletic v Winchester Castle (7.30), Locks Heath v Hedge End Rangers (7.30), Paulsgrove v Infinity (6.15), QK Southampton v Bush Hill (6.15), Stockbridge v Otterbourne (7.30).

Thursday, April 7
EVO-STIK SOUTHERN LEAGUE

Premier Division: Kettering v Dunstable.

SYDENHAMS WESSEX LEAGUE
Premier Division: Blackfield & Langley v Salisbury, Folland Sports v Sholing.

Division One: East Cowes Vics v Hythe & Dibden, US Portsmouth v Pewsey Vale.

Saturday, April 9
VANARAMA NATIONAL LEAGUE

Altrincham v Bromley, Barrow v Macclesfield, Boreham Wood v Southport, Braintree v Forest Green, FC Halifax v Aldershot, Grimsby v Eastleigh, Guiseley v Cheltenham, Lincoln v Chester, Torquay v Tranmere, Welling v Kidderminster, Woking v Gateshead, Wrexham v Dover.

VANARAMA NATIONAL LEAGUE SOUTH
Basingstoke v Weston-super-Mare, Concord v Bath City, Eastbourne Borough v Hemel Hempstead, Ebbsfleet v Chelmsford, Gosport Borough v Bishops Stortford, Havant & Waterlooville v Truro City, Maidenhead v St Albans, Maidstone v Dartford, Margate v Sutton, Oxford City v Hayes & Yeading, Whitehawk v Wealdstone.

EVO-STIK SOUTHERN LEAGUE

Premier Division: Bideford v Bedworth, Cambridge City v Slough, Chesham v Kettering, Chippenham v Biggleswade, Dorchester v Redditch, Dunstable v Cirencester, Hitchin v Poole Town, Kings Lynn v Weymouth.

Leamington v Paulton Rovers, Merthyr Town v St Neots.

Division One South & West: Banbury v AFC Totton, Bishops Cleeve v Winchester City, Burnham v Evesham,

Larkhall v Wantage, Mangotsfield v Slimbridge, Marlow v Bridgwater, North Leigh v Cinderford, Shortwood v Taunton, Swindon Supermarine v Yate, Tiverton v Basley, Wimborne v Didcot.

SYDENHAMS WESSEX LEAGUE

Premier Division: Andover Town v Fawley AFC, Bournemouth Poppies v AFC Portchester, Fareham Town v Bemerton HH, Folland Sports v Alresford, Hamworthy Utd v Team Solent, Horndean v

Brockenhurst, Lympstone Town v Salisbury, Moneymeades v Newport IoW, Sholing v Whitchurch, Verwood v Cowes Sports.

Division One: Downton v Romsey, Fleet Spurs v Andover NS, Hythe & Dibden v Laverstock & Ford, New Milton v East Cowes Vics, Portland v Christchurch, Ringwood v AFC Stoneham, Tadley Calleva v Pewsey Vale, US Portsmouth v Totton & Elring.

PUMA ENGINEERING HAMPSHIRE PREMIER LEAGUE

Premier Division: Baffins MR v Hambledon Club, Bush Hill v Overton, Coldest Common v Otterbourne, Fleetlands v Liphook, Hedge End Rangers v Clanfield, Liss Athletic v Paulsgrove, Stockbridge v Locks Heath, Winchester Castle v Infinity.

Division One: AFC Petersfield v Andover Lions, Four Marks v Hayling Utd, Michelmersh & Timsbury v Netley Central, Sway v Lyndhurst.

Combination East: Hayling Utd v Liphook.

SATURDAY'S FOOTBALL RESULTS AND TABLES

Barclays Premier League

AFC Bournemouth	0	Man City	4
		Fernando 7, De Bruyne 12 Aguero 19 Kolarov 90 Att 11,192	
HT 0-3			
Arsenal	4	Watford	0
		Sanchez 4, Iwobi 38 Bellerin 48 Walcott 90 HT 2-0	
A. Villa	0	Chelsea	4
		Att 59,981 Loftus-Cheek 26 Alexandre Pato 45 pen Pedro 46,59	
HT 0-2			
Liverpool	L	Tottenham Hotspur	L
HT L-L			
Norwich	3	Newcastle	2
		Mitrovic 71,86 pen	
Klose 45 Mbokani 74 Olsson 90 HT 0-0			
Stoke	2	Swansea	2
Atellay 13 Krikic 53 HT 1-0		Sigurdsson 68 Paloschi 79 Att 27,649	
Sunderland	0	W.B.A.	0
HT 0-0		Att 45,144	
West Ham	2	Crystal P	2
Lanzini 18 Payet 41 HT 2-1		Delaney 15 Gayle 75 Att 34,857	

	HOME					AWAY									
	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pt	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pt	
Leicester	31	9	5	1	25	15	10	4	2	29	16	66			
Tottenham	31	9	5	2	30	12	8	5	2	26	12	61			
Arsenal	31	9	3	3	23	10	8	4	4	29	20	58			
Man City	31	10	1	5	39	18	6	5	4	17	14	54			
West Ham	31	7	6	2	24	16	6	6	4	25	21	51			
Man Utd	30	8	4	2	19	7	6	4	6	19	20	50			
SAINTS	31	8	3	5	28	18	5	5	5	13	14	47			
Stoke	32	7	3	6	19	18	6	5	5	17	21	47			
Chelsea	31	7	4	2	29	24	6	4	5	20	20	44			
Liverpool	29	5	5	3	19	17	3	6	5	26	23	44			
W.B.A.	31	6	4	6	19	21	4	6	5	11	16	40			
Everton	29	4	4	8	29	28	5	7	1	22	13	38			
Bournemouth	32	5	4	7	20	27	5	4	7	18	27	38			
Watford	31	5	4	7	14	14	5	3	7	16	22	37			
Swansea	32	6	5	5	15	18	3	5	8	18	24	37			
Crystal P	31	4	2	10	16	22	5	5	5	15	20	34			
Norwich	32	5	5	6	22	24	3	2	11	13	32	31			
Sunderland	31	4	5	6	17	16	2	4	10	19	39	27			
Newcastle	31	4	6	5	22	22	2	1	3	9	36	25			
A. Villa	32	2	4	10	11	29	1	3	12	11	33	16			

SkyBet Championship

	HOME					AWAY									
	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pt	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pt	
Blackburn	1	Preston	2												
Ward 13															
HT 1-2															
Bolton	0	Reading	1												
HT 0-0															
Brighton	2	Burnley	2												
Stephens 30															
Knockaert 45															
HT 2-1															
Cardiff	2	Derby City	1												
Ecuado Manga 37															
O'Keefe 68															
HT 1-0															
Fulham	2	M K Dons	1												
McGinnock 54															
Donnelly 75															
HT 0-0															
Huddersfield	0	Sheff Wed	1												
HT 0-0															
Hull	4	Bristol C	0												
Davies 14															
Snodgrass 39															
Diane 71															
Aluko 80															
HT 2-0															
Nottm For	0	Brentford	3												
HT 0-0															
Rotherham	2	Leeds Utd	1												
HT 1-0															
Wolves	0	Ipswich	20												
HT 0-0															

	HOME					AWAY									
	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pt	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pt	
Burnley	39	13	4	2	35	13	8	9	3	28	20	76			
Middlesb	38	13	3	2	27	6	9	4	7	24	19	73			
Brighton	39	13	4	3	30	17	6	11	2	24	24	72			
Hull	38	12	6	1	36	8	8	3	8	18	15	69			
Sheff Wed	39	11	6	2	36	15	6	8	6	21	21	65			
Derby Cty	39	10	6	3	28	13	7	7	6	24	24	64			
Cardiff	39	11	7	2	30	18	5	7	7	21	24	62			
Ipswich	39	8	6	5	23	18	8	5	7	23	26	59			
Birmingham	38	9	3	6	20	17	6	8	6	22	20	56			
Preston	39	7	8	4	18	16	7	6	7	20	20	56			
Q.P.R.	39	8	8	4	33	23	4	7	8	16	23	51			
Wolves	39	6	8	6	24	25	6	5	8	22	26	49			
Reading	38	7	9	3	21	13	5	3	11	22	30	48			
Leeds Utd	38	5	7	7	16	22	6	7	6	22	25	47			
Blackburn	39	7	6	5	23	18	4	6	9	14	20	46			
Notts For	39	7	6	7	22	22	4	7	8	12	17	46			
Brentford	38	7	3	9	24	27	6	4	9	27	32	46			
Huddersfield	39	7	4	9	29	25	5	5	9	23	29	45			
Bristol C	39	6	6	8	23	29	6	4	10	17	33	43			
Rotherham	39	8	4	8	30	32	4	2	13	16	31	42			
Fulham	39	6	5	9	32	32	3	9	7	27	33	41			
M K Dons	39	7	3	9	18	25	2	7	11	15	28	37			
Charlton	39	5	8	7	22	28	3	3	13	14	42	35			
Bolton	39	4	10	6	22	24	0	4	5	14	45	26			

SkyBet League One

Barnsley	P	Oldham	P
Postponed - new date to be confirmed.			
Blackpool	2	Southend	0
Cullen 49			
Blyth 79			
HT 0-0			
Bradford	1	Scunthorpe	0
Davies 68			
HT 0-0			
Burton Albion	1	Bury	1
Walker 90			
HT 0-0			
Chesterfield	4	Port Vale	2
Campbell-Ryce 47			
Hart 6,979			
Leitch-Smith 66			
HT 0-0			
Walsall	0	Millwall	0
Leigh 60			
HT 0-0			</

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